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“the funnest thing
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funnest things!”

January 2024

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TUNE IN



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

2 January 2023



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The Thrill of the Hunt Geocaching!



Charlie is 12 years old, and when he is not busy playing football, basketball or competing in track, he enjoys being outdoors. Photo taken by Jordan Ashley Photography, Cedar Park.

View the magazine online at austinfamily.com

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Editor's Note



JESS ARCHER

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

Instead of making New Year's resolutions to stop bad habits, why not take a positive spin on things? Consider adding to your life instead of deleting. Our Lifelines article this month is all about 24 great foods to add to your family meals in 2024.

In that spirit, read up on this month's feature article by Bart Stump all about geocaching. It's a fun, free activity that you and your family can do here in Austin or anywhere you travel. All you need is a smartphone and an adventurous spirit.

At Austin Family, we're also adding a new column to our magazine. Every other month the savvy people at

Thinkery will bring you a craft idea that your kids can easily complete from home.

Don't forget to tune in to FOX 7 Austin on Thursday mornings to catch our media correspondent, Alison Bogle, discussing all the great content you can find in Austin Family magazine.

Get out there and have some great adventures in 2024!

2024

WRITERS SHOWCASE



We're looking for amazing stories written & illustrated by amazing kids.

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Austin IN ACTION

GO TO AUSTINFAMILY.COM FOR WEEKLY UPDATES OF AUSTIN IN ACTION NEWS

January Did You Know?

46 B.C.

Year Julius Caesar established January 1st as New Year's Day
Source: www.quora.com

1.5 tons

Confetti thrown in Times Square on New Year's Eve
Source: www.lifeprotect.com

12

Number of grapes to eat at midnight on New Year's Eve for good luck in the new year
Source: www.madewithhappy.com

Holiday Cleanup

Registration is now open for the Keep Austin Beautiful 360 holiday ornament cleanup on Friday, January 5. Come and volunteer to help remove decorations on the Loop 360 trees in the new year. In addition to collecting litter and recycling, any ornaments or decorations that remain intact will be set aside for donation.

Keep Austin Beautiful provides the supplies (including bags, litter grabbers and gloves) and the best waste disposal

practices. This event will take place in the wooded areas abutting 360, however sidewalks are not available along the roadside and trail. This cleanup great for youth, but parental supervision is recommended. For more information and to sign up to help go to: www.keepaustinbeautiful.org.



Earn a College Degree in High School

Round Rock ISD wants to remind parents that the district provides two ways for students to graduate with a diploma and a free college degree. Rising Round Rock ISD freshmen can graduate with their high school diploma, certifications, and a free two-year Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS) degree, or Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree.

At Round Rock ISD's Early College High School, students can earn their high school diploma and up to 60 transferable college credit hours in four years at no cost.

Another pathway to earning a college degree in Round Rock ISD is through the Pathways in Technology Early College High School program. P-TECH

will prepare Round Rock ISD students for high-wage, high-demand career fields. Students in grades nine through 12 can experience a college coursework and workplace learning sequence that culminates in an associate degree, all at no cost.

Parents of current 8th graders in Round Rock ISD are encouraged to attend one of two informational sessions about how to apply at ECHS or for the P-TECH program. The sessions will be held on January 9th and 16th. To learn more, go to www.news.roundrockisd.org



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Calling All Artists



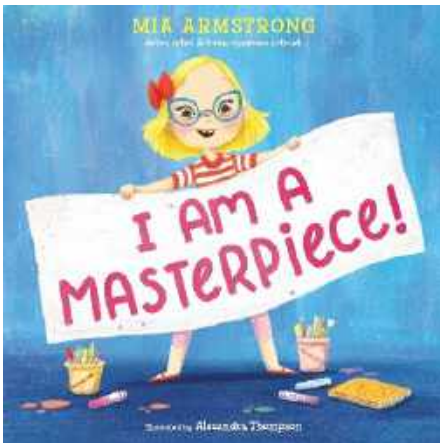
Whale Shark by Susanna Liang, previous winner of the Fish Art Contest.

Wildlife Forever is proud to announce the continuation of its partnership with the Guy Harvey Foundation for the 2024 The Art of Conservation Fish Art Contest.

The Fish Art Contest is open to kindergarten – 12th graders from anywhere in the world.

Art eligible for the Guy Harvey Shark Award must depict any species of shark and must include a written component relevant to the chosen species. One student artist will be chosen as the Guy Harvey Shark Award winner and will receive a print signed by Dr. Harvey (up to a \$200 value) and be eligible to win additional awards and recognitions. The deadline to submit entries to the Fish Art Contest is February 28th, 2024.

For more information and full contest details, go to www.wildlifeforever.org



Activist, Actress and Author

“Don’t whisper. Don’t look away. Do say hello.” These are just some of the many insights that twelve-year-old actress, model, voiceover artist and Down syndrome activist, Mia Armstrong shares about how to treat people with Down syndrome in her debut picture book, “I am a Masterpiece!” The book goes on sale January 9, through Random House and encourages readers to be mindful of how they interact with those who are different.

With “I am a Masterpiece!” and her advocacy work, Mia hopes to show others like her that they are seen. She also wants to help the world better understand those friends, classmates and family members in their lives who are neurodivergent.

Mia also recently starred in her first major motion picture film, “A Christmas in New Hope,” written and directed by local Austin filmmaker, Julia Barnett.



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*2022 TEA

24 Foods to Add in '24

Lifelines

MARGARET LOW

Low is a registered dietitian nutritionist who lives in Austin with her family. She works with families, parents and athletes on how to fuel well and feel better. Find her at www.mlownutrition.com and www.beyond-miles.com.



All foods can fit into a healthy lifestyle for families. But how? Reframing how we think about food and nourishment might be the answer for the gut, mind and waistline. Ditch the restrictive mindset and focus on adding nutrients to your family meals in 2024.

The gastrointestinal system thrives on diversity and when the gut is happy, mental, emotional and physical health will follow. Step out of that comfort zone and diversify the meals you prepare for your family. Here are 24 foods to add to your plate in 2024.

Probiotics



Probiotics are healthy bacteria that live in the gastrointestinal tract. They are beneficial for immune and gut health and are found in:

- 1. Yogurt.** Choose 'no added sugar' and look for 'live and active cultures' on the ingredient list. Not a fan of yogurt? Try kefir or cottage cheese.
- 2. Fermented foods.** Sauerkraut, kimchi, miso and kombucha help provide a desirable environment for a healthy gut microbiome.

High Fiber + Antioxidant-Rich Foods



Fiber plays a critical role in gastrointestinal health and blood sugar regulation. Pre-biotics are fiber-containing foods that feed probiotics. Antioxidants fight against free radicals, reduce inflammation, support brain health and more. Most fruits and vegetables contain fiber and antioxidants. There are many varieties of antioxidants so diversity is key, even within food groups.

- 3. Coffee.** Don't give up your daily cup of joe! One to two cups daily is ideal.
- 4. Dark chocolate.** Even this sweet treat, in moderation, has health benefits.
- 5. Berries.** Rich in fiber and antioxidants, berries are a nutritional powerhouse.
- 6. Leafy green vegetables.** Kale, arugula, spinach or collard greens are great sources of vitamins A, C, K and B.
- 7. Cruciferous vegetables.** Broccoli and cauliflower provide vitamins C, K, calcium, potassium and magnesium.
- 8. Beets.** High in nitrates, beets

positively affect blood flow, may reduce blood pressure and can improve athletic performance. Beets contain anthocyanin which is only found in purple produce.

- 9. Spaghetti squash.** Any yellow/orange squash, carrots or sweet potatoes contain beta-carotene which supports eye health and vision. Substitute spaghetti squash for regular noodles or include it with pasta in the next Italian dish.
- 10. Quinoa.** Considered the whole grain queen, quinoa is a great source of iron, protein and fiber. Protein and fiber provide satiety and help regulate blood sugar.

Healthy Fats



Unsaturated fats raise 'good' cholesterol (HDL), increase fullness and have beneficial effects on the heart and brain. Omega-3 fatty acid is a healthy fat that reduces inflammation. Some food sources include:

- 11. Walnuts.** These nuts are exceptionally high in Omega-3s, but all nuts contain desirable fats.
- 12. Seeds.** Chia, flax and hemp are

great options that can be added to baked goods or energy balls to enhance digestive, heart and brain health.

13. **Olive oil.** Great to cook with or add to foods when trying to boost healthy fat consumption.
14. **Avocados.** This fruit is a great source of healthy fat, fiber, potassium and many more vitamins and minerals.
15. **Fatty fish.** Salmon and herring are high in Omega-3s and are also a good source of vitamin D.

Vitamin D



Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin that acts like a hormone and may play a role in mental and physical health. The sun is a great source of vitamin D but most individuals do not get enough sunlight to meet vitamin D requirements.

16. **Mushrooms.** The only produce that contains vitamin D! Mushrooms also support a healthy gut, brain and immune system.
17. **Egg yolks.** Contrary to popular belief, egg yolks are extremely nutrient-dense and are full of B vitamins, vitamin D, choline and many more nutrients.

Immune-boosting Foods



The foods listed below contain anti-inflammatory properties that support immunity, longevity, heart and overall health.

18. **Turmeric.** Rich in color, turmeric has been shown to improve mood, cholesterol levels and eye health.
19. **Cilantro.** This simple herb can be added to meals, dips, and even tossed into a salad for a positive impact on mood, anxiety, blood sugar and heart.
20. **Garlic.** Potent in flavor, garlic can help detox the body and has natural antibiotic components.
21. **Onions.** Inexpensive and tasty, onions have antibacterial properties that support respiratory, gut and bone health.
22. **Bone Broth.** Known for immunity-

boosting, it's a great source of collagen which supports healthy skin, joints and bones.

23. **Grass-fed meats.** Meat is an excellent source of iron-rich protein that contains antioxidants and Omega-3s, making it a great immune-boosting option.
24. **Lentils.** Especially for non-meat eaters, lentils are a great source of protein and iron. Change it up and try other legume sources

such as chickpeas or beans for similar nutritional and health benefits.

Remember that adding, not subtracting foods items will help boost your health. Get that grocery list going and start diversifying your family meals in 2024.

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Looking for a free, fun activity that will get the family outside and in adventure mode? Try geocaching. Geocaching combines the thrill of treasure hunting with the ability to find specific locations utilizing Global Positioning System (GPS).

GPS was made available to the public in 2000 and uses orbiting satellites to determine positions on the Earth's surface. Geocaching participants quickly realized they could conceal caches in hidden storage places and post the coordinates for others to find them.

Originally, the expense of handheld GPS units was cost-prohibitive and limited the number of participants. However, with the introduction of smartphones, geocaching apps have helped put this hobby on the map.

One of the more popular apps is called simply, Geocaching. It is extremely user-friendly and features a map that shows the user's location and the location of nearby geocaches. Scrolling the map shows other caches and users can zoom in and out to examine an area of interest more closely.

Selecting a cache will provide a player with its name, distance away, difficulty rating, terrain rating and the size of the cache. In addition, the cache's name may provide a clue to where it is hidden or an overall theme. The app will not pinpoint the cache for a player, but it will show an aerial image of approximately where the cache is located and should get players within 16 feet. Remember, it relies on an orbiting satellite so the results may vary.

The app does have a "hint" option that may provide additional clues. Previous

The Thrill of the Hunt Geocaching!



BART A. STUMP

Stump is an educator, historian, writer and adventurer. He has been published in numerous magazines, writing on topics such as intriguing personalities, interesting locations, historical events and parenting.

visitors may also post information or photos that may assist players in their searches. Some caches are easily found while others may be cleverly hidden. Popular hiding spots may include guard rails and signposts, under bushes, hanging from tree branches, or inside dead logs or artificial stones.

Caches vary in size from nano (approximately the size of a pinky fingertip), micro (a 35 mm film canister), small (sandwich-sized plastic container), regular (ammo box or shoebox), large (bucket) or other (which is explained in the cache description).

Once the cache has been located, what can a user expect to find inside? Each cache will have a log to sign and date “so remember to bring along a pen.” Depending on the size of the cache, it may contain themed items related to the cache such as trinkets, toys, stickers, erasers or geocoins. A geocoin is a

token with a tracking code that allows a player to trace its progression as it is passed from person to person or cache to cache.

The rules are simple. If a player takes an item from a cache, he is expected to leave a comparable item. The player can make a note in to the app that he found the item and also leave photos. Return the cache to its hiding place so that others may enjoy the thrill of the hunt.

Sometimes things go wrong and a player is not able to find the cache. Possibly it has been damaged or the log is wet. In that case, a player can use the app to send a message to the owner of the cache alerting her that it needs maintenance. Some people carry extra logs or zip-lock bags to replace damaged ones.

For many people, the thrill of finding geocaches inspires them to create and hide their own. The app makes

this easy to do. Just make sure to have the property owner’s permission before placing a cache. Specially made containers are available for purchase online or may be created using a film canister or plastic container. Pretty much anything will work if the container is durable and waterproof.

The Geocaching app also allows a player to leave a description of the cache and provide a back story on why it was hidden in a particular location. The activity button lists other people’s comments and whether they found the cache or not. Attributes can also be given with information such as wheelchair accessibility, if it is recommended for kids, if the site is accessible 24/7, etc.

So, if you’re looking to get the family out of the house for some inexpensive fun, give geocaching a try. The thrill of the hunt can lead to lasting memories and grand adventures.



Let's Chat about ChatGPT

The Learning Curve

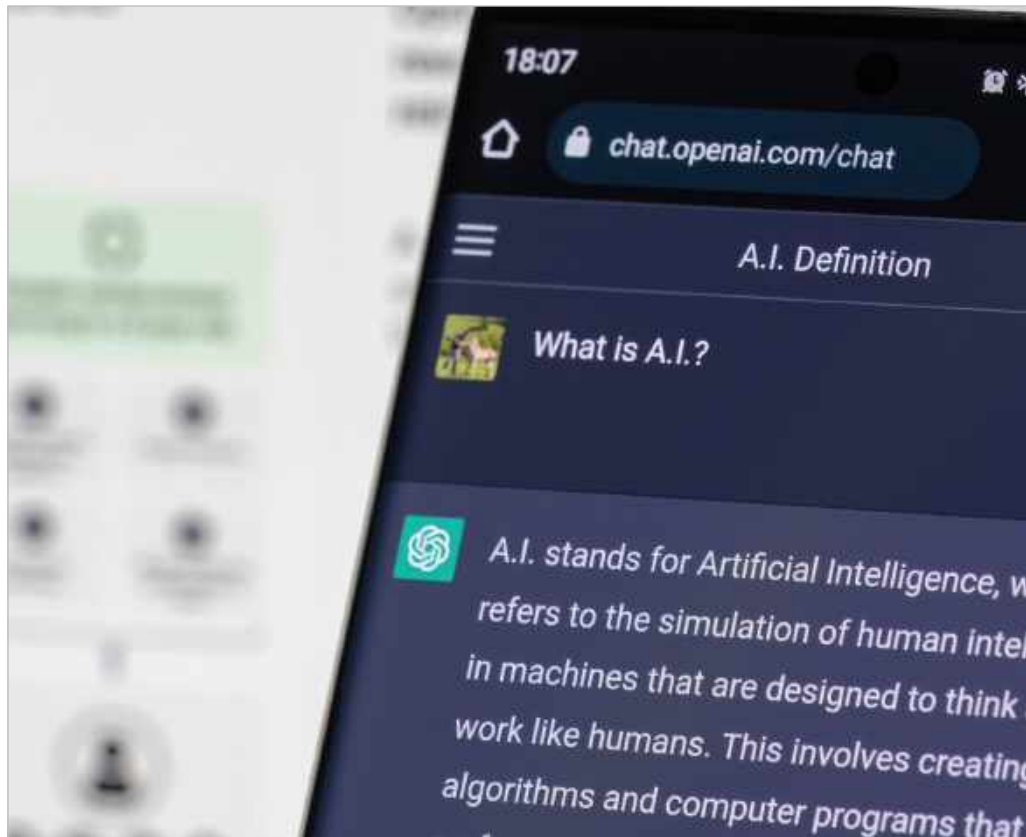


ALISON BOGLE

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.

The launch of OpenAI's ChatGPT artificial intelligence (AI) platform in November 2022, has raised a number of concerns regarding the use of artificial intelligence by students. Will AI mean an end to authentic work? Will it degrade students' abilities to think critically? Will it ruin creativity and imagination? After researching the issue, I decided to engage with ChatGPT myself to see how our ideas regarding the use of AI in the classroom compare.

ChatGPT generates its answers based on the text it has been trained on, which includes the internet, books and various articles. It is not able to access the internet in real time, so my conversational partner was only able to generate answers from information up to January 2022. It was very easy to set up a free account and kick off our conversation. (One upside to "chatting" with artificial intelligence? No need for small talk!)



Me: What is ChatGPT?

ChatGPT:

ChatGPT is a language model developed by OpenAI. The "Chat" in ChatGPT indicates its suitability for conversational applications. It is designed to understand and generate human-like text based on the input it receives. It has 175 billion parameters, making it one of the largest language models to date. These parameters enable it to perform a wide array of language tasks, including text completion, question-answering, language translation and more. Users can interact with ChatGPT by providing prompts or questions, and the model generates responses based on its training data.

My reaction:

Because ChatGPT doesn't have the most up-to-date information, its answers, at times, may be incorrect. Also, when it doesn't have enough information to pull from, the AI platform may make up an answer, a phenomenon known as a hallucination. Finally, because ChatGPT draws its answers from the copious number of sources it is exposed to, it takes on the potential misinformation or biases of the source material. If the team of developers is not representative of all groups, it can also reinforce any implicit biases.

Me: Does AI have a place in the classroom?

Chat GPT:

Yes, AI has the potential to play a significant role in the classroom and education more broadly. While AI offers numerous opportunities in education, it's important to consider ethical considerations, data privacy and the need for human oversight. Integrating AI into the classroom should be done thoughtfully, with a focus on enhancing the learning experience and supporting educators rather than replacing human involvement entirely.

My reaction:

When ChatGPT first launched, some of the country's largest school districts banned its use in the classroom until they could figure out how to handle the technology and its potential effects. However, once the technology was out there and accessible, it was virtually impossible to stop students from engaging with it. Instead, many school districts are now working to develop ways to lean into the benefits of AI, while mitigating the potential downsides, such as plagiarism. ChatGPT can help teachers with lesson plan design, grading and newsletter and communication generation, among many other things.

Me: How are teachers addressing the misuse of Chat GPT?

ChatGPT:

Addressing the potential misuse of ChatGPT or similar language models is a significant concern for educators. By combining clear guidelines and ongoing supervision, teachers can help create a positive and safe learning environment where AI tools are used as educational aids rather than potential sources of misuse. Collaboration with other stakeholders, including parents and school administrators, is crucial in addressing and preventing the misuse of AI in educational settings.

My Reaction:

Teachers have an amazing ability to adapt to challenges and pivot. Rather than banning it, many teachers are encouraging the use of ChatGPT, so they can also teach their students how to effectively manage this technology. A recent study by Nootroedge showed which states have the highest number of students using AI to write their college application essays. Texas ranked in the top five. This means that it's vital for teachers to help students think critically about what ChatGPT serves up and to recognize that we shouldn't turn all our thinking over to AI, but rather should learn to make it work for us.

I enjoyed my time chatting with ChatGPT. I found myself asking it

things like, "What are some side dish recipes that go well with salmon?" Benign questions for sure, but because of my research, I was also aware that everything I asked AI is now permanently recorded. The power of ChatGPT is incredible, and being able

to approach it with a critical mindset is crucial. Once again, we are reminded that teachers have a profound role in shaping the minds and futures of their students.



Join us for an Open House!

Wednesday, January 10, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Saturday, January 20, 11 a.m.–3 p.m. and

Monday, January 29, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

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EDUCATION GUIDE

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	GRADES	LOCATION(S)	PHONE	WEBSITE
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CATHEDRAL SCHOOL OF ST. MARY'S	PreK3-8	DT Austin	512-476-1480	www.smcschoolaustin.org
CHALLENGER SCHOOL	PreK-8	Avery Ranch	512-341-8000	www.challengerschool.com
	PreSch-K	Pond Springs	512-258-1299	www.challengerschool.com
	PreSch-K	Round Rock	512-255-8844	www.challengerschool.com
HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK-8	North Austin	512-246-4455	www.holyfamilycs.org
KIRBY HALL SCHOOL	PreK4-8	Central Austin	512-474-1770	www.kirbyhallschool.org
NATUREVERSITY	5-12 yrs	North and South	512-461-9395	www.natureversity.org
PARAGON PREP	3-8 yrs	North Austin	512-459-5040	www.paragonprep.com
REDEEMER LUTHERAN SCHOOL	15 mos-Grade 8	North Austin	512-451-6478	www.redeemerschool.net
SAN JUAN DIEGO CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL	9-12	South Austin	512-804-1935	www.sjdchs.org
SANTA CRUZ CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK-8	Buda	512-312-2137	www.sccstx.org
ST. AUSTIN CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK3-8	DT Austin	512-477-3751	www.staustinschool.org
ST. DOMINIC SAVIO CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL	9-12	North Austin	512-388-8846	www.saviochs.org
ST. GABRIEL'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL + ST. MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC ACADEMY	PreK-8	West Austin	512-327-7755	www.sgs-austin.org
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ST. LOUIS CATHOLIC SCHOOL	K-8	North Austin	512-614-6622	www.slcsaustin.org
ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK3-12	Taylor	512-352-2313	www.stmarystaylor.org
ST. THERESA'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK-8	North Austin	512-451-7105	www.st-theresa.org

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HARMONY SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE	6-12	Southeast Austin	512-693-0000	www.hseaustin.harmonytx.org
HARMONY SCIENCE ACADEMY	PK-5	Cedar Park	512-494-5151	www.hsacp.harmonytx.org
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KINDERGARTEN/PREK MONTESSORY DAY CARE

ELITE MONTESSORI	6wks-6 yrs	Lake Travis	512-980-8510	www.elitemusicmontessori.com
EXTEND-A-CARE YMCA FOR KIDS	3-8 yrs	77 area campuses	512-472-9402	www.austinyymca.org/locations/extend-a-care
SNAPDRAGON PRESCHOOL (Must be potty-trained)	3-5 yrs	North Austin	512-593-6226	www.snapdragonpreschool.com
STEPPING STONE SCHOOLS	Infant-12 yrs	17 locations throughout Austin area	512-459-0258	www.steppingstoneschool.com
YMCA CENTRAL TEXAS	Infant-12 yrs	6 locations	512-615-5511	www.ymcactx.org

See above Private School Listings for these Child Care and Montessori Schools:

- 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
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SUMMER CAMP GUIDE

CAMP	AGES	WEBSITE	PHONE	LOCATION
DAY CAMPS				
ART CAMPS OF CORDOVAN ART SCHOOL	5-16	www.cordovanartschool.com	512-275-4040	CP, NW SW
BADGERDOG CREATIVE WRITING CAMPS	9-18	www.austinlibrary.org/creative-writing-camps	512-542-0076	C
CAMP DOUBLECREEK	4-14	www.campdoublecreek.com	512-255-3661	PF
CAMP ROUND ROCK	4-14	www.ymcactx.org	512-246-9622	RR
CAMP SWITCH WILLO	6-13	www.switchwillo.com	512-920-0554	N
COUNTRY HOME LEARNING CENTER	5-13	www.countryhomelearningcenter.com	512-288-8220	N, S
DANCE DISCOVERY	3-18	www.dancediscovery.com	512-419-7611	C, RR
D&D WITH DEE CAMPAIGN CAMPS	9-18	www.DnDwithDee.com	512-695-3435	
FANTASTIC MAGIC CAMP	5-12	www.magiccamp.com	512-988-3045	C
IDEA LAB	5-13	www.austin.idealabkids.com	512-710-9654	C
IMAGINE ARTS ACADEMY OF AUSTIN	4-12	www.imagineartsacademy.com	512-892-1143	Multiple
JUMP! GYMNASTICS	3-10	www.jump-austin.com	512-705-9659	S, C
KIDSACTING SUMMER CAMPS	4-18	www.kidsactingstudio.com	512-836-5437	18 Locations
REDEEMER SUMMER CAMPS	4-8	www.redeemerschool.net	512-451-6478	N
PARAGON PREP SUMMER CAMP	3yo-8th	www.paragonprep.org	512-459-5040	N
ROCK ABOUT CLIMBING	9-18	www.rock-about.com	512-415-0804	Multiple
SPICEWOOD COUNTRY CAMP	3 ½-10 ½	www.spicewoodcountry.com	512-346-2992	NW
STEPPING STONE SCHOOLS	5-11	www.steppingstoneschool.com	512-459-0258	17 locations
YMCA AUSTIN	4-14	www.austinyanca.org	512-322-9622	Multiple
YMCA CENTRAL TEXAS	4-14	www.ymcactx.org	512-250-9622	RR, CP, G, H

OVERNIGHT CAMPS

CAMP CHAMPIONS	6-17	www.campchampions.com	830-598-2571	Marble Falls, TX
CAMP HEART O' THE HILLS FOR GIRLS	6-16	www.hohcamp.com	830-238-4650	Hunt, TX
CAMP STEWART FOR BOYS	6-16	www.campstewart.com	830-238-4670	Hunt, TX
NEWK'S OUTBACK ADVENTURE CAMP	8-17	www.newktennis.com	830-625-9105	New Braunfels, TX
SUGAR & SPICE RANCH CAMP	5 & up	www.texasHORSECAMPS.com	830-460-8487	Bandera, TX
YMCA CAMP TWIN LAKES	6-16	www.ymcactx.org	512-250-9622	CP

LOCATIONS

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

PF for Pflugerville

RR for Round Rock

CP for Cedar Park

ARTS

ART CAMPS OF CORDOVAN ART SCHOOL	5-16	www.cordovanartschool.com	512-275-4040	CP, NW SW
BADGERDOG CREATIVE WRITING CAMPS	9-18	www.austinlibrary.org/creative-writing-camps	512-542-0076	C
DANCE DISCOVERY	3-18	www.dancediscovery.com	512-419-7611	C, RR
IMAGINE ARTS ACADEMY OF AUSTIN	4-12	www.imagineartsacademy.com	512-892-1143	Multiple
KIDSACTING SUMMER CAMPS	4-18	www.kidsactingstudio.com	512-836-5437	18 Locations

SPORTS

CAMP DOUBLECREEK	4-14	www.campdoublecreek.com	512-255-3661	PF
CAMP ROUND ROCK	4-14	www.ymcactx.org	512-246-9622	RR
CAMP SWITCH WILLO	6-13	www.switchwillo.com	512-920-0554	N
JUMP! GYMNASTICS	3-10	www.jump-austin.com	512-705-9659	S, C
NEWK'S OUTBACK ADVENTURE CAMP	8-17	www.newktennis.com	830-625-9105	New Braunfels, TX
ROCK ABOUT CLIMBING	9-18	www.rock-about.com	512-415-0804	Multiple
SPICEWOOD COUNTRY CAMP	3 ½-10 ½	www.spicewoodcountry.com	512-346-2992	NW
YMCA AUSTIN	4-14	www.austinyymca.org	512-322-9622	Multiple
YMCA CENTRAL TEXAS	4-14	www.ymcactx.org	512-250-9622	RR, CP, G, H

ACADEMIC

COUNTRY HOME LEARNING CENTER	5-13	www.countryhomelearningcenter.com	512-288-8220	N
D&D WITH DEE CAMPAIGN CAMPS	9-18	www.DnDwithDee.com	512-695-3435	
FANTASTIC MAGIC CAMP	5-12	www.magiccamp.com	512-988-3045	C
IDEA LAB	5-13	www.austin.idealabkids.com	512-710-9654	C
MAD SCIENCE	4-12	www.austin.madscience.org	512-892-1143	Multiple
PARAGON PREP SUMMER CAMP	3yo-8th	www.paragonprep.org	512-459-5040	N
REDEEMER SUMMER CAMPS	4-8	www.redeemerschool.net	512-451-6478	N
STEPPING STONE SCHOOLS	5-11	www.steppingstoneschool.com	512-459-0258	17 locations

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JUNE 24-28 Renaissance Revival
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AUGUST 12-16 Magical Creatures
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KIDZONE



Photo credit: Michael Gail Photography

Use your creative problem-solving skills to twist, bend and curve wire to create unique three-dimensional artwork! This maker activity provides an opportunity for kids to have fun while exploring STEAM concepts like malleability, structural integrity, form and composition.

Materials you'll need:

- Pliers. Use to cut, bend, twist or shape wire.
- Beads. Used for decoration or to add a playful element.
- Wire and pipe cleaners. Flexible materials that can be bent and shaped.
- Styrofoam (optional). Sturdy material used to hold up the sculpture.

Step one: Bend, twist and form.

- Bend, curve or flex the wire to create angles and shapes. Twist, rotate or spiral the wire around itself to add texture or create interesting patterns.

Step two: Decorate!

- Add beads to incorporate more shapes and pops of colors to your artwork.

Step three (optional): Add a base.

- Add wires and pipe cleaners onto a Styrofoam base to keep it sturdy. No need for this step if your imagination takes you in a different direction.
- Have a maker under 5?
- Have littles explore the same hands-on concepts of bending, shaping and twisting using tin foil.

Thinkery is a nonprofit children's museum that brings joy to learning through play-based STEAM exploration for all children. Learn more at www.thinkeryaustin.org.

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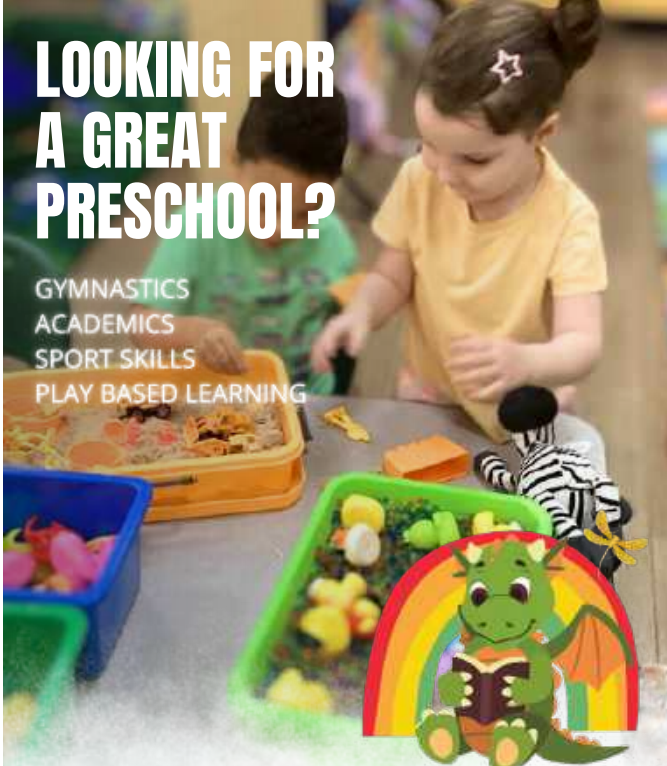
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How Does Remarriage Affect Kids?

Family Matters



DR. BETTY RICHARDSON

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



Q I'm planning to get remarried in April. I have two children, ages five and nine. My fiancé has a daughter who is 14 years old. I'm wondering what kind of behaviors my children and his child might exhibit before and after the wedding, especially when we all move in together. How can we get our two families to successfully blend together?

A Children who have a parent who is remarrying can display a variety of emotions and behaviors. Some children carry feelings of insecurity and abandonment by their parent who is remarrying. Some children are aggressive to the stepparent, while others keep an emotional distance. Some children are jealous when their parent shows affection or attention to the stepparent. Kids who were hoping their divorced parents would get back together will experience disappointment when one of the parents remarries.

Here are my suggestions for helping your kids adjust to your remarriage.

1. Leading up to the wedding, plan fun events for the children, your fiancé and yourself. Play competitive games where you are paired as a team with his daughter, and he is paired with your children. Set aside time for bonding. Remember to keep your expectations in check. Bonding with stepchildren takes time.
2. Discuss how your bedrooms and bathroom areas will be assigned. Will stepkids share rooms? Talk with your kids to determine how they feel about sharing a bedroom. Be willing to adjust your vision of how a blended family will work. Make room for your child's emotional and spatial needs.
3. Talk with your future stepchild about "our home" instead of "my home." It may be that your fiancé and his

daughter may never think of your home as "our home." If this happens, and you can afford it, buy a different home together with the kids involved in the selection. This helps create the idea of "our house."

4. Be intentional about scheduling time to spend with your fiancé's daughter as well as time for your fiancé to spend time with each of your kids. Your soon-to-be stepdaughter probably hasn't had to share her dad much. In April she will begin sharing her dad with you and her stepsiblings. Sit down with her to discuss quality time and where she values it most with her dad.

I suspect you and your fiancé will do a good job of blending your families. It takes effort to make a blended family work.

VISITAR www.austinfamily.com
¿Cómo afecta un nuevo matrimonio a los niños?

January 2024 calendar

Go to www.austinfamily.com for expanded listings.

Check our calendar online which is updated daily. Any family-friendly events can be posted at www.austinfamily.com and will be made live once approved. Certain restrictions apply.

Mon 1

Polar Bear Plunge. 10:30 a.m. Take part in a Leander tradition and make a splash. Registration is \$10 and includes membership in the Polar Bear Club along with a shirt and ticket for door prizes. FREE to watch. Bledsoe Pool, 601 South Baghdad. www.leandertx.gov.

Adventure Club. 4 to 5 p.m. Join us for after-school activities and exploration with ATLAS Club. Each week you can learn a new skill or explore STEAM activities. Ages 8-12. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr. www.wblibrary.org.

Hands-On Crafting (age 10+). 5 to 7 p.m. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr. www.wblibrary.org.

Tue 2

Family Games. 6 to 7:30 p.m. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr. www.wblibrary.org.

Get Crafty. 6:15 to 7:45 p.m. Grab your family and bring your friends. Rita will teach us a new, cute craft every month. Howson Branch, 2500 Exposition Blvd. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Wed 3

Kids Create: Origami. 1 to 3 p.m. Central Library, 710 W. César Chávez St. Gallery. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Luminations. 5:45 to 9 p.m. Our glowing celebration of winter's natural beauty returns with all-new light installations. Inspired by the four elements — earth, air, fire and water. Spans nearly two miles of our Texas Arboretum. Come immerse yourself in the season. Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave. \$13 - \$28. www.wildflower.org.

Mario Kart 8 Tournament (all ages).

6 to 8 p.m. Join us for a friendly, recreational competition. 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.

Thu 4

Cirque Italia. 1:30 to 9:30 p.m. Have you ever imagined a country boy's adventure from farm life to the bustling lights of the big city? Barton Creek Square, 2901 S Capital of TX Hwy. \$20 - \$60. www.cirqueitalia.com.

Get Crafty: Mug Madness. 3:30 to 5 p.m. Come design your own cozy winter mug, then create a mason jar of hot chocolate mix to drink when you get home. Manchaca Road Branch, 5500 Manchaca Rd. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

CONTINUED: **Luminations**, see Wed 3.

Fri 5

Preschool Imagination Station. 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Designed for young learners, Imagination Station encourages learning

through play. Milwood Branch, 12500 Amherst Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Big Kid Art (age 8+). 2 to 3 p.m. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr. www.wblibrary.org.

Teen Space. 3:30 to 5 p.m. Come to the library after school to play games, eat snacks, and relax. Southeast Branch, 5803 Nuckols Crossing Rd. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

CONTINUED: **Luminations**. See Wed 4; **Cirque Italia**, see Thu 4.

Sat 6

Baby Bloomers. 8 to 10 a.m. A special program exclusively for visitors ages 0-3 years and their families. Thinkery, 1830 Simond Avenue. www.thinkeryaustin.org.

Story Starts: An Improv Show for Kids and their Adults. 11 to 11:50 a.m. Live comedy for kids and their adults. \$5 - \$12. Cold Towne Theater, 1700 East 2nd St. www.excusedabsence.com.

TLC Meeting. 2 to 4 p.m. Teen Library Council (ages 10+) For tweens and teens to plan and run library events, create displays and more. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr. www.wblibrary.org.

CONTINUED: **Luminations**. See Wed 4; **Cirque Italia**, see Thu 4.

Sun 7

H-E-B Free First Sunday: Trains! 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Explore the world of trains this weekend. Bullock Texas State History Museum, 1800 Congress Ave. FREE. www.thestoryoftexas.com.

Craft Drop-In. 2 to 5 p.m. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr., www.wblibrary.org.

CONTINUED: **Cirque Italia**, see Thu 4.

Mon 8

Teens Create: Alcohol Ink. 4 to 5:30 p.m. Join us for a relaxing after-school program creating alcohol ink artwork. All supplies will be provided by the library as long as they are available. Old Quarry Branch, 7051 Village Center Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Teen Central Presents: Movie Mondays. 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. This event is for teens 13-18 only. Join us for a movie screening on select Mondays of each month. Central Library, 710 W. César Chávez St. Gallery. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Family Night: Cut Out Penguin Craft. 6 to 6:45 p.m. Come for a fun-filled family evening 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.

Big Band Bash. 7 to 9 p.m. Put on your dancing shoes and bring your own beverages and snacks to the Lakeway Activity Center, 105 Cross Creek Rd. www.lakeway-tx.gov.

CONTINUED: **Cirque Italia**, see Thu 4; **Adventure Club**, see Mon 1.

Tue 9

Redeemer Middle School Info. Sessions ~ Open House. 8:15 to 9:15 a.m. and 1 to 2 p.m. If you are considering a private Christian education for middle school, come learn what Redeemer has to offer. Redeemer School, 1500 W. Anderson Lane. FREE. www.redeemerschool.net.

Redeemer School Invites you to Kinder Connect. 9 to 10 a.m. Come experience Kindergarten at Redeemer School. Meet our teachers; see our classrooms and visit the campus. Redeemer Lutheran School, 1500 W. Anderson Ln. FREE. www.redeemerschool.net.

Kids Club. 3:30 to 4 p.m. Join us for an engaging crafting, reading, building or exploring afternoon. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. www.library.pflugervilletx.gov.

CONTINUED: **Family Games**, see Tue 2.

Wed 10

Get Crafty: Perler Beads. 3 to 5 p.m. Create fun perler bead charms, magnets and keychains using available patterns or completely from your imagination. Windsor Park Branch, 5833 Westminster Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Tween Time: Graphic Novel Book Club: Squished. 4:30 to 5:15 p.m. Tween programs are different every week. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. www.library.pflugervilletx.gov.

CONTINUED: **Cirque Italia**, see Thu 4; **Kids Create: Origami**, see Wed 3.

Thu 11

Homeschool Tweens - Music Program. 2 to 2:45 p.m. The Homeschool Tween Group (ages 8-12) meets once a week to socialize, play games, make crafts and learn new skills. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. www.library.pflugervilletx.gov.

Board Game Night (All Ages). 6 to 8 p.m. Join us for a fun night of playing board games. Choose from our extensive board game library. Pflugerville Recreation Center, 400 Immanuel Rd. www.parks.pflugervilletx.gov.

CONTINUED: **Cirque Italia**, see Thu 4.

Fri 12

Kids Move & Groove. 10 to 10:45 a.m. Children up to age 5 with an adult are welcome. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. www.library.pflugervilletx.gov.

Preschool Imagination Station. 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Designed for young learners, Imagination Station encourages learning through play. Southeast Branch, 5803 Nuckols Crossing Rd. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

CONTINUED: **Cirque Italia**, see Thu 4; **Big Kid Art**, see Fri 5; **Teen Space** see Fri 5.

Sat 13

Winter Pfest. 2 to 4 p.m. This event is sponsored in part by Friends of the Pflugerville Library. Join us to celebrate winter in a fun-filled event. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. www.library.pflugervilletx.gov.

CONTINUED: **Cirque Italia**, see Thu 4; **Baby Bloomers**, see Sat 6; **Story Starts: An Improv Show for Kids and their Adults**, see Sat 6.

Sun 14

Crafty Café - Paper Making. 2 to 3:30 p.m. Be Crafty (ages 12+) Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. www.library.pflugervilletx.gov.

CONTINUED: **Cirque Italia**, see Thu 4; **Craft Drop-In**, see Sun 7.

Mon 15

MLK Community Festival. 9 a.m. A short program at the MLK Statue on the University of Texas campus, then we will march to the south steps of the Capitol for a rally. University of Texas at Austin - MLK Statue, 110 Inner Campus Dr. FREE. www.mlkcelebration.com.

Martin Luther King, Jr Walk. 10 a.m. 31st Walk for Peace, Justice and Equality. Remember. Celebrate. Act. Elgin Depot Museum, 14 Depot St. FREE. www.elgintexas.gov.

Hands-On Crafting (age 10+). 5 to 7 p.m. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr. www.wblibrary.org.

CONTINUED: **Cirque Italia**, see Thu 4; **Adventure Club**, see Mon 1.

Tue 16

Redeemer School Invites you to Kinder Connect. 9 to 10 a.m. Come experience Kindergarten at Redeemer School. Meet our teachers; see our classrooms and visit the campus. Redeemer Lutheran School, 1500 W. Anderson Ln. FREE. www.redeemerschool.net.

CONTINUED: **Kids Club**, see Tue 9; **Family Games**, see Tue 2.

Wed 17

Tween Time: Snowman Photo Block. 4:30 to 5:15 p.m. Tween programs are different every week. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. www.library.pflugervilletx.gov.

Zine Night. 5:30 to 7 p.m. Learn how to make and craft a zine with the Austin Public Library. Central Library, 710 W. César Chávez St. Gallery. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Super Smash Bros Tournament (all ages). 6 to 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.

CONTINUED: **Kids Create: Origami**, see Wed 3.

Thu 18

Board with Books. 5 to 8 p.m. Explore the Central Library's board game collection at this monthly board game meetup. Central Library, 710 W. César Chávez St. Gallery. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Fri 19

CONTINUED: **Big Kid Art**, see Fri 5; **Teen Space**, see Fri 5.

Sat 20

Unplug and Explore: Texas Capitol (Ages 6-12). 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Unplug & Explore is headed to the Texas Capitol in Austin, TX. Pflugerville Recreation Center, 400 Immanuel Rd. www.parks.pflugervilletx.gov.

Kirby Hall School Open House. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. If you're interested in learning more about Kirby Hall School, we invite you to our open house. 306 West 29th St. FREE. www.kirbyhallschool.org.

Winter Perler Party. 2 to 3:30 p.m. Come make winter-themed perler bead projects and sip hot chocolate at the Southeast Branch. This event is for children and families. Southeast Branch, 5803 Nuckols Crossing Rd. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

A Charlie Brown Christmas. 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. The healing and sustaining power of music. First Unitarian Church, 4700 Grover Avenue. \$12 - \$48. www.austinchambermusic.org.

Resound Presents: Riddlin' Kids at Mohawk. 7:30 to 11:59 p.m. All Ages Mohawk Austin, 912 Red River St. \$18.

CONTINUED: **Baby Bloomers**, see Sat 6; **Story Starts: An Improv Show for Kids and their Adults**, see Sat 6; **TLC Meeting**, see Sat 6.

Sun 21

Goat Cuddles (Blue Lotus in Seguin). 2 to 3:30 p.m. Come and enjoy the beautiful Blue Lotus winery while hanging out with bouncing baby goats. Blue Lotus Winery, 5151 FM 20. \$10. www.goatshenanigans.com

CONTINUED: **Craft Drop-In**, see Sun 7.

Mon 22

Family Night: 3D Printer Demo. 6 to 6:45 p.m. Come for a fun-filled family evening 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.

German Book Club. 6 to 7 p.m. Der neue Buchclub ist da! Komm' vorbei und lies deutsche Romane mit uns. Diesen Monat lesen wir Der Buchspazierer von Karsten Henn. Pleasant Hill Branch, 211 E. William Cannon Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

CONTINUED: **Baby Bloomers**, see Sat 6; **Adventure Club**, see Mon 1.

Tue 23

Redeemer School Invites you to Kinder Connect. 9 to 10 a.m. Come experience Kindergarten at Redeemer School. Meet our teachers; see our classrooms and visit the campus. Redeemer Lutheran School, 1500 W. Anderson Ln. FREE. www.redeemerschool.net.



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CONTINUED: **Kids Club**, see Tue 9; **Family Games**, see Tue 2.

Wed 24

Tween Time: Plastic Canvas

Bookmarks. 4:30 to 5:15 p.m. Tween programs are different every week. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. www.library.pflugervilletx.gov.

CONTINUED: **Kids Create: Origami**, see Wed 3.

Thu 25

Craft Supply Swap. 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. If you have craft items taking up space, share them at our supply swap. All ages are welcome to attend. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. www.library.pflugervilletx.gov.

Fri 26

Shield Ranch Hiking Series. 1 to 4 p.m. Step into a journey of wellness and exploration with Shield Ranch's 2024 Hiking Series. Campsite at Shield Ranch, 10417 Crumley Ranch Rd. \$10 - \$14. www.shieldranch.com.

The Little Mermaid. 2 p.m. This original retelling of Hans Christian Andersen's classic combines modern technologies and the ancient art of storytelling to put a new twist on this well-loved fairy tale. The Whisenhunt at ZACH Theatre, 202 S. Lamar. \$16 - \$25. www.zachtheatre.org.

CONTINUED: **Big Kid Art**, see Fri 5; **Teen Space**, see Fri 5.

Sat 27

Get Crafty: Perler Beads. 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Create fun perler bead charms, magnets

and keychains using available patterns or completely from your imagination. Old Quarry Branch, 7051 Village Center Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

CONTINUED: **Baby Bloomers**, see Sat 6; **Story Starts: An Improv Show for Kids and their Adults**, see Sat 6; **The Little Mermaid** see Fri 26.

Sun 28

Cat Kid Comic Club. 2 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Ages 6+ Based on the best-selling graphic novel series by Dav Pilkey, the creator of "Dog Man." Paramount Theatre, 713 Congress Ave. \$13. www.austintheatre.org.

Mini Maker Market. 2 to 5 p.m. This Mini Maker Market is perfect for your tiny entrepreneurs and future businesspeople. The Hive, 10542 Menchaca Road. www.hiveaustin.com.

CONTINUED: **The Little Mermaid**, see Fri 26; **Craft Drop-In**, see Sun 7.

Mon 29

Dungeons & Dragons for Teens - One Shot. 4 to 6 p.m. Join an after-school adventure. These adventures will be built as one-shots for players of all experiences and backgrounds. Old Quarry Branch, 7051 Village Center Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Hands-On Crafting (age 10+). 5 to 7 p.m. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr. www.wblibrary.org.

Family Night: Wooden Puzzles. 6 to 6:45 p.m. Come for a fun-filled family evening 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.

CONTINUED: **Baby Bloomers**, see Sat 6; **Adventure Club**, see Mon 1.

Tue 30

CONTINUED: **Kids Club**, see Tue 9; **Family Games**, see Tue 2.

Wed 31

Tween Time: Paper Circuits. 4:30 to 5:15 p.m. Tween Time happens every Wednesday at the library. Tween programs are different every week. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. www.library.pflugervilletx.gov.

CONTINUED: **Kids Create: Origami**, see Wed 3.

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Austin Then *and* Now

BRITTANY WILLIAMS

Williams is a writer and Realtor® in Austin where she loves exploring the city's green spaces with her husband, son and daughter.

Kerbey Lane Café

Now

Then



Early 1980s. Original owner, Patricia Ayer with a young Mason Ayer (blue jacket) in front of the first Kerbey Lane Café.

While local eateries in Austin have come and gone throughout the years, Kerbey Lane Café has been a mainstay since it opened its doors back in the 1980s. Located in a bungalow on Kerbey Lane in central Austin, founders David and Patricia Ayer operated their restaurant where they also lived. Their aim was to bring community-inspired, made-from-scratch comfort food to central Austinites. For the next 40+ years, that's just what they did, all while keeping the business 100% locally owned and operated.



Updated and popular as ever, Kerbey Lane Café's original location, central Austin. Photo Courtesy: Kerbey Lane Café

Today, Kerbey Lane Café is still owned and operated by the Ayer family through CEO Mason Ayer. Kerbey Lane has eight Austin area locations, plus a recent addition in San Antonio. Its rotating seasonal menu keeps options fresh, and it's not rare to see a line out the door on weekend mornings. Its pancakes are so beloved that die-hard Kerbey Lane fans can

find its signature pancake mix for purchase at local grocery stores, but let's not forget about its celebrated queso! As the 'Official Queso Partner' of Austin FC, soccer fans can now enjoy some famous "Kerbey Queso" at Q2 Stadium.

Outside of providing delicious, affordable meals to the community, Kerbey Lane Café also gives back. Last year it launched Kerbey Kindness, which is a platform for regularly lending support to local organizations in need. Kerbey Lane Café also supports local artists. Dine-in guests enjoy walls lined with beautiful, rotating art. Art shows last four months and artists, keep all proceeds from their sales. These are the small touches that remind us that David and Patricia Ayer built more than a diner; they built a lasting Austin icon.

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