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# HOUSTON METHODIST SUGAR LAND HOSPITAL EARNS SIXTH CONSECUTIVE "A" GRADE FOR PATIENT SAFETY



*Anna Floyd, RN; Maria Succi, RN; Monica Salinas, RN; Jackie Trotter, RN; Ann Prather, RN; Chris Siebenaler, CEO; Damon Smith, RN; Pauletta Blackstock, RN; Diane McGraw, RN, Quality Director; Tanuja Parmar, RN; and Brooke Taylor, RN*

Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital received its sixth consecutive "A" for patient safety in the Fall 2016 Hospital Safety Score ratings program. The Hospital Safety Score is an elite designation from The Leapfrog Group that sets the highest standards for patient safety in the United States.

Developed under the guidance of Leapfrog's Blue Ribbon Expert Panel, the Hospital Safety Score uses

performance measures from a broad range of government and industry organizations, including the American Hospital Association, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, among others.

More than 2,600 U.S. hospitals are rated twice each year on 30 measures of publicly available safety data. Surveyed hospitals receive a letter grade based on how well they protect patients from errors, injuries, accidents and infections while in the hospital. Grades are calculated by top patient safety experts, are peer-reviewed, fully transparent and free to the public.

Houston Methodist Sugar Land was one of 844 hospitals nationwide — less than one-third of those surveyed — to earn an "A" grade in the Fall 2016 survey results.

"Protecting patients from harm is the most important charge for any hospital," said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. "We recognize and appreciate 'A' hospitals' vigilance and continued dedication to keeping their patients safe."

Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital's ongoing patient safety efforts include the development of detailed protocols and best practices focusing on a

widerange of safety risks, along with in-depth training, ongoing communication and regularly scheduled audits, to ensure that staff members are aware of — and are following — proper safety processes.

"Patient safety is central to our mission, and we are proud of our results," said Chris Siebenaler, CEO at Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital. "Our success depends on the daily actions of our physicians, nurses, technicians and other staff members, and our 'A' grade from the Hospital Safety Score survey shows that we are making a significant difference in keeping our patients safe while under our care."

For more information about Houston Methodist Sugar Land Hospital, visit [houstonmethodist.org/sugarland](http://houstonmethodist.org/sugarland) or call 281.274.7500 for a physical referral. Visit our Facebook page at [fb.com/methodistsugarland](http://fb.com/methodistsugarland) for the latest news, events and information.

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## NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Nothing like a brand new year to bring new energy to your life! A chance at a fresh start with whatever we resolve to do... diet, exercise, school, finances. Whatever your resolutions are, my hope is that we all are able to achieve them in 2017. If better health and fitness is on your list, our feature, Exercise Without Spending a Dime, is a great way to get started.

Have you ever wondered how large families manage everything? I know parents with one child that don't always balance things as well as those with multiple kids. In Smart Perspectives We Can All Learn From Large Families, one mom shares her tips that will help families of all sizes.

This month also includes our annual Education Directory. Open houses and previews are happening now to get you prepared for the fall. If you are looking for a new school for your child, make sure you check out the Directory and advertisements in this issue.

Wishing you much success, happiness and health in 2017!

*Kim*  
Kim Carlisle, Editor

## COVER CUTIE

This precious Cover Cutie is 8 year old Audrey. She enjoys playing soccer and tennis. Her favorite foods are boiled Crawfish and Sushi. She likes watching her favorite movie, The Descendants. She loves spending time with her cousins and her two younger sisters, Vivian (4) and Evelyn (6).

Her favorite things to do are arts & crafts, horseback riding and singing. The family loves to go for walks, play outside and ride bikes and scooters together. She has had two big accomplishments recently. She is on the Honor Roll at school and she just competed in her first 5K race with her dad.

Parents Allison and Darren are very proud of their Cutie Patootie!



### Cover Photo By:

Jennifer Stoehr  
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jenniferstoehrphotography.com

*JENNIFER STOEHR*  
PHOTOGRAPHY

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# EXERCISE

## WITHOUT SPENDING A DIME

by Pam Molnar

As the holidays wind down and the New Year approaches, people begin to regret the extra cookie, holiday dips and second glasses of wine that seemed like such a good idea at the time. January is the month when many people sign up for membership with the intention of shedding those extra pounds. Yet, regular gym-goers will tell you that by February, most of the new members have stopped coming.

The cost of that unused membership, \$58 per month on average according to Statistic Brain, is not your only option to lose your holiday weight. If you are looking to save a little money and still feel comfortable in your little black dress, check out these exercise options that won't cost you a dime.

### CHECK OUT EXERCISE VIDEOS

Whether you enjoy the calming stretches of yoga or the more intense workouts, your local library carries a variety of exercise videos for all skill levels. Most rental periods are one week for videos, giving you the opportunity to try a lot of different exercise routines.

### YOUTUBE

Discover thousands of cardio, fat burning, dance, yoga, and general fitness videos. With YouTube available on so many devices, there is no excuse for not finding a time and place to exercise. Head to the park, close your office door or workout in the privacy of your own home.

### DO THE STAIRS

Head to a nearby hotel or office building and take the stairs. Set the timer on your phone or simply count the number of flights you take. Can't get away from home? If you have stairs in your house, turn on some music and start climbing. Want to get outside? Try the bleachers at the local high school.

### SPRING CLEAN

Now is the perfect time to clean out the attic, crawlspace or basement. Lifting boxes, moving furniture and heavy cleaning can burn up 400 calories per hour.

### JUMP ROPE

Every garage has an old jump rope or tie down rope. Get out in the sun and start jumping. This is an easy activity to involve your older kids. Try making it a competition – the one who jumps the least times has to do the dishes.

### GO OLD SCHOOL

Remember middle school gym class? Put on a t-shirt and shorts and start with the basics. Try jumping jacks, pushups, sit ups, squats and lunges. Structured workout suggestions can be found on Pinterest or by Googling "calisthenics routines".

### DANCE

Invite your girlfriends to come over and crank up the tunes for a kitchen dance party. If your kids have a game console, ask them to play Just Dance with you. Don't have the game? Borrow it from a friend!

### MAKE USE OF HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

Make your own weights by filling empty water bottles and milk jugs with water or sand. Place on a scale and mark the weight on the bottle. Look online for exercise routines that use kitchen chairs, walls or stairs.

### SHOP IT OFF

That's right! Lace up your shoes and head to the mall for some free indoor exercise. Walking at 3 mph can burn over 200 calories per hour. Download Map My Run app and set your activity to walk. This free app will track your pace, time, distance and calorie burn. Walk with a friend, push a stroller or simply wander the mall.

### GO FOR A RUN

You see joggers everywhere – on trails, city streets or in local parks. For motivation, sign up to do a local 5K with your friend or spouse.

### PARK IT

Pull out the soccer ball, tennis rackets or basketball for a quick pick up game with family or friends. For added exercise, bike or walk to the park. Many parks allow dogs on their leashes so bring your four-legged friend for some exercise, too.

## BURN THOSE CALORIES!

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the average woman is 63.8" tall and weighs 166.2 lbs. With that in mind, the chart below shows how many calories the average woman can burn without having to pay for a monthly gym membership. Want to find the calorie burn for your own weight and height? Check out [HealthStatus.com](http://HealthStatus.com).

### CLEANING THE HOUSE

- Dusting (15 minutes) – 45 calories
- Mopping (15 minutes) – 85 calories
- Washing Dishes (15 minutes) – 42 calories
- Sweeping (15 minutes) – 39 calories

### CALISTHENICS

- Jumping Jacks (10 minutes) – 56 calories
- Push Ups (5 minutes) – 32 calories
- Sit Ups (5 minutes) – 28 calories
- Jumping Rope (10 minutes) – 126 calories

### GOING PLACES

- Running 6 mph (30 minutes) – 378 calories
- Walking 3 mph (30 minutes) – 164 calories
- Hiking (30 minutes) – 224 calories
- Stairs (30 minutes) – 304 calories

### PLAYING SPORTS

- Frisbee (20 minutes) – 76 calories
- Tennis (singles, 30 minutes) – 229 calories
- Soccer (casual, 30 minutes) – 264 calories
- Dancing (30 minutes) – 224 calories



even little ones

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

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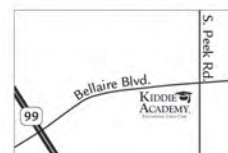


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## The Fun-Time Calendar

January 2017



**Parents:** Some programs require tickets and/or reservations, always contact event locations to confirm times and requirements.

**Jan 1 - 15 • Houston Zoo Lights**  
• Houston Zoo • houstonzoo.org • 713-533-6500

**Jan 1 - 8 • Moody Gardens - 8 Holiday Attractions One Venue**  
• Ice Land, Festival of Lights, Cirque Joyeux Noel, 3D Films, Rudolph 4D, Ice Skating, Arctic Slide, Train Rides, plus live entertainment, great food, group rates, hotel packages and more. • Moody Gardens Galveston • moodygardens.com • 800-582-4673

**Jan 3 • Free Afternoon at Houston Zoo** • 12:00pm • Houston Zoo • houstonzoo.org • 713-533-6500

**Jan 3 • Middle School Program--Cupcake Decorating** • 6:30pm • Free • Sugar Land Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2140

**Jan 4 • After-School Break--Game Day** • 4:15pm • Free • Sugar Land Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2140

**Jan 4 • After-School Break** • 4:30pm • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Jan 5 • After-School Break--Homemade Playdough** • 4:30pm • Free • First Colony Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2800

**Jan 5 • Bank of America Screen on the Green: Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone** • 7:00pm • You are welcome to bring blankets and chairs to view from the hill. • Free • Discovery Green in Downtown Houston • discoverygreen.com • 713-400-7336

**Jan 5 • LEGO Skyline London and Chicago Event** • 7:00pm • Join us to help build our exciting, new LEGO Skyline collection in-store display for London and Chicago. Then after, enjoy being creative and collaborative with other customers by building with LEGO Architecture Studio white bricks. • Free • Barnes & Noble, West Oaks Village • bn.com • 281-293-8699 • Barnes & Noble, First Colony Mall • bn.com • 281-313-8323

**Jan 6 • Mommy Mingle** • 10:00am • Come and enjoy free coffee and breakfast snacks on us (while supplies last) and meet other mommies from your part of town. Bring your little ones

for awesome playtime in Tot\*Spot, our on all day • The Village School • exclusive exhibit for children 35 months thevillageschool.com/ • 281-496-7900 and under. Daddies, nannies and caretakers are welcome too! • Fort Bend Children's Discovery Center • childrensdiscoveryfb.org • 832-742-2800

**Jan 6 • Parent's Survival Night** • 6:30pm • \$30 Members; \$35 Non-Members • The Little Gym of Sugar Land/Missouri City • tlgsugarlandtx.com • 281-277-5470

**Jan 6 • Girls Night Out** • 7:00pm • Themes and activities will vary month to month but often include makeovers, dancing and all the fun girls come to expect from Sweet & Sassy. • \$25/girl or 2 for \$40 • Sweet & Sassy, Sugar Land Town Square • sweetandsassy.com • 281-240-2060

**Jan 7 & 29 • The Creative Connection--Game Day** • 2:30pm • Free • University Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-5100

**Jan 7 • ISEE Testing at The Village School** • ISEE testing will be going

**Jan 7 • Free Hands-On Workshop** • 9:00am • Crate Toolbox--All kids get to keep their craft, receive a free certificate of achievement, a Workshop Apron, and a commemorative pin while supplies last. • At Your Local Home Depot • homedepot.com

**Jan 7 • Touchdown Tour** • 10:00am-2:00pm • Features a one-of-a-kind fan experience with interactive games, a Houston Texans mobile locker room, special photo booths, giveaways, music, food and drinks. • Burnett Bayland Park, 6000 Chimney Rock • housuperbowl.com

**Jan 7 • Family Story Time** • 10:15am • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Jan 7 • Saturday Morning Dance Party** • 10:30am • Age: 5 yrs & under • Free • Sienna Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2900

Find even more family friendly events at FortBendParent.com



**Jan 7 • Sensory Friendly Screenings •** 11:00am • Brighter Lighting, Lower Sound, Shorter Previews and Accepting Environment. • Santikos Palladium AVX • santikos.com

**Jan 7 • Karate/Self-Defense Demo •** 2:00pm • Local karate/self-defense school Safety America will demonstrate basic techniques. • Free • Sugar Land Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2140

**Jan 7 • Monster Jam •** 7:00pm • NRG Stadium • monsterjam.com

**Jan 9, 23 & 30 • Mother Goose Time •** 10:30am • Free • University Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-5100

**Jan 9, 23 & 30 • Cheap Skate Night •** 4:00pm • Glide around the ICE for just \$8 per person plus tax. Includes skate rental. • Discovery Green in Downtown Houston • discoverygreen.com • 713-400-7336

**Jan 9, 23 & 30 • Pajama Night Story Time •** 6:30pm • Free • Sienna Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2900

**Jan 9, 23 & 20 • Pajama Night Story Time •** 6:30pm • Free • First Colony Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2800

**Jan 9, 23 & 30 • Pajama Night Story Time •** 7:00pm • Free • Missouri City Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2100

**Jan 9 & 30 • Minecraft Monday •** 4:30pm • Register online. • Age: 4th-8th Grades • Free • Sugar Land Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2140

**Jan 10 • St. Thomas the Apostle Episcopal School Enrollment Open House •** 10:00am • St. Thomas the Apostle Episcopal School • stesnb.org • 281-333-1340

**Jan 10 • After-School Break--Simple LEGO Challenges •** 4:00pm • Free • Sienna Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2900

**Jan 10 • Music and History of the West African Kora •** 7:00pm • Enjoy music of the West African Kora. • Free • Sienna Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2900

**Jan 11 • Afternoon Story Time--Favorite Stories •** 4:00pm • Free • Sienna Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2900

**Jan 11 • After-School Break--LEGO Day •** 4:00pm • Free • University Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-5100

**Jan 11 • Tween Program--Popcorn Olympics •** 4:15pm • Free • Sugar Land Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2140

**Jan 11 • Kinder Korner •** 4:30pm • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Jan 12 • After-School Break--DIY Piggy Banks •** 4:00pm • Personalize a piggy bank with recyclable materials. • Free • Albert George Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 979-793-4270

**Jan 12 • After-School Break--Frozen Fun •** 4:30pm • Free • Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-4675

**Jan 12 • After-School Break--Winter •** 4:30pm • Free • Missouri City Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2100

**Jan 13 - Feb 5 • The Nerd •** Fort Bend Theatre • fortbendtheatre.com • 281-208-3333

**Jan 14 • Lakeshore Learning Event - Dinosaur Discovery •** 10:00am-3:00pm • Explore the wild, prehistoric world of dinosaurs. \*Hands-on science stations \*Hourly stories \*One-of-a-kind crafts Contact your local Lakeshore Learning Store for more details! • Age: 3-11 • Free • Lakeshore Learning • lakeshorelearning.com • 781-355-1893

**Jan 14 • Touchdown Tour •** 10:00am-2:00pm • Features a one-of-a-kind fan experience with interactive games, a Houston Texans mobile locker room, special photo booths, giveaways, music, food and drinks. • Alief Community Park, 11903 Bellaire Blvd. • houserbowl.com

**Jan 14 • Inky Panels Graphic-Novel Book Club •** 12:00pm • The kick-off party will feature trivia, games, fun people, cosplay, prizes, and more. • Age: 14-20 yrs • Free • Missouri City Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2100

**Jan 14 • The Creative Connection •** 2:30pm • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Jan 14 • The Creative Connection--Special Kick-Off Event •** 3:00pm • Free • George Memorial Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-342-4455

**Jan 17 • Middle School Program--Game Night •** 6:30pm • Free • Sugar Land Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2140

**Jan 17 • Family Fun Night: Science •** 6:30pm • Enjoy simple, but fun, hands-on science activities that everyone can do together. • Free • Sienna Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2900

**Jan 18 • After-School Break--Fan-tastic New-Year Fun •** 4:15pm • Free • Sugar Land Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2140

**Jan 18 • After-School Break •** 4:30pm • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Jan 19 • After-School Break--Paper-Bag Coiled Basket •** 4:00pm • Free • George Memorial Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-342-4455

**Jan 19 • Magazine Silhouettes •** 4:00pm • Using cardboard silhouettes and recycled magazines, teens will create one-of-a-kind pieces of wall-art that reflect their own unique interests and styles. • Free • University Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-5100

**Jan 19 • After-School Break--Button-Making and Bottle-Cap Magnets •** 4:30pm • Free • First Colony Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2800

**Jan 20 • Parent's Survival Night •** 6:30pm • \$30 Members; \$35 Non-Members • The Little Gym of Sugar Land/Missouri City • tlgsugarlandtx.com • 281-277-5470

**Jan 21 • The Honor Roll School - Missouri City Open House •** 10:00am • The Honor Roll School - Missouri City • thehonorrollschool.com • 877-959-4180

**Jan 21 • Clifford Day •** 2:00pm • Clifford the Big Red Dog will be featured at this fun family activity, which includes crafts, games, books, and a puppet show. • Free • Sugar Land Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2140

**Jan 21 • The Three Little Pigs Performance •** 2:00pm • Free • First Colony Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2800

**Jan 21 • The Creative Connection--Mythbusters •** 2:30pm • Free • Sienna Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2900

**Jan 21 • The Creative Connection--Let's Go LEGO! •** 2:30pm • Free • University Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-5100

**Jan 21 • Odd Squad Live! •** 5:30pm • Jones Hall • spahouston.org

**Jan 22 • The Three Little Pigs Performance •** 2:00pm • Free • George Memorial Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-342-4455

**Jan 23 - Mar 4 • Winter Family Reading Club •** Designed to encourage families to read, learn, and have fun together. Families participate in the program by reading books and completing optional "challenges" that can be done at home. • Fort Bend County Libraries • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-341-2677

**Jan 23 - 26 • Children's Book Week •** 4:00pm • Each day a different children's book will be celebrated with craft activities for the whole family to enjoy. • Free • Albert George Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 979-793-4270

**Jan 23 • Prospective Family Preview Event •** 9am and 1pm • Calvary Episcopal Preparatory • ces-richmond.org • 281-342-3161

**Jan 23 • Family Reading Club Kick-Off Story Time •** 7:00pm • This special story time event will celebrate the start of the Winter Family Reading Club, which takes place from January 23 to March 4. • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Jan 24 • After-School Break--Chinese New Year Dragon Craft •** 4:00pm • Free • Sienna Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2900

**Jan 25 • Prospective Family Preview Event •** 9am and 1pm • Calvary Episcopal Preparatory • ces-richmond.org • 281-342-3161

**Jan 25 • Afternoon Story Time--From A-Z and 1, 2, 3 •** 4:00pm • Free • Sienna Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2900

**Jan 25 • After-School Break--Imagine & Tell •** 4:00pm • Free • University Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-5100

**Jan 25 • Tween Program--Game Day •** 4:15pm • Free • Sugar Land Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2140

**Jan 25 • Kinder Korner •** 4:30pm • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Jan 25 • The Creative Connection •** 6:00pm • Make connections through manga, graphic novels, technology and art! • Free • George Memorial Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-342-4455





Many parents find themselves so busy with work, school, extracurricular activities, and errands that cooking weeknight meals seems impossible. In reality, eating at home can be faster, easier, and more affordable, even on those busy school nights. Try these tips for quick and easy meal planning.

**MAKE TWO.** If you are making one casserole, why not make two? One can be eaten now, and the other can be frozen and saved for dinner another night.

**STOCK THE FREEZER.** Fill your freezer with both pre made and homemade items to have on hand for a busy week.

**USE THE SLOW COOKER.** Toss some things together in the morning and come home to a hot meal after a long day.

**BUY PRE MADE INGREDIENTS.** Pre cut vegetables, cooked rotisserie chicken, and ready to grill marinated meat are perfect for the busy family.

**LEFTOVER NIGHT.** Designate one night a week to eat whatever is in the fridge and save time and money

**STOCK THE PANTRY.** Have meals on hand you can turn to in a bind, such as spaghetti, bean burritos, or quesadillas

**DOUBLE DUTY.** Use extra ingredients to make two meals. For example - Leftover taco meat could become enchiladas, nachos, or chili. Grilled chicken breast could be used for a salad, soup, or a casserole.

**THEME NIGHTS.** Monday - Pasta, Tuesday - Tacos, Wednesday - Stir Fry.... and to make it even easier, repeat every week to streamline your grocery list, steady your grocery budget, and simplify meal planning.

**LOVE EATING OUT?** - Add a "Night Out" to your meal plan once in awhile to treat yourself and your family.

**MAKE IT FUN.** Get the kids involved in meal planning, food prep, and most importantly, enjoy mealtime together.

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Sugar Land, TX 77479



**Jan 26 • The Honor Roll School - Sugar Land Open House** • 9am and 5pm • The Honor Roll School - Sugar Land • thehonorrollschool.com • 281-265-7888

**Jan 26 • After-School Break--Hand-Towel Art** • 4:00pm • Learn how to fold hand towels into the shapes of animals, flowers, and more. • Free • Albert George Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 979-793-4270

**Jan 27 • Prospective Family Preview Event** • 9am and 1pm • Calvary Episcopal Preparatory • ces-richmond.org • 281-342-3161

**Jan 28 - 29 • Katy Home and Garden Show** • Get a head start on your home and garden expansion and experience two buildings packed with more than 300 exhibits which will focus on decorating; remodeling; window treatments; kitchens and baths; do-it-yourself; flooring and more. • Merrell Center in Katy • katyhomeandgardenshow.com

**Jan 28 • Family Space Day** • Astronauts of all ages, can fly to the Moon with NASA volunteers in the Expedition Center. Don't miss this special opportunity to participate in real astronaut training. Expedition Times: 3pm, 4pm, 5:30pm & 6:30pm • George Observatory • hmns.org

**Jan 28 • 2x2 Read-a-Thon** • 10:00am • Volunteers will read one-on-one or in small groups to help students in kindergarten through 2nd grade tackle their 2x2 reading assignments from school. • Free •

Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-4675

**Jan 28 • Fun Family Event** • 2:00pm • A special performance by family entertainer Andy Roo. • Free • Sienna Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2900

**Jan 28 • Library Zoofari** • 2:00pm • Families will have a chance to learn about a variety of exotic animals that will be visiting from Wild Things Zoofari, a traveling zoo that provides a hands-on experience. • Free • Missouri City Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2100

**Jan 28 • Master Storyteller to Weave Tales of Wit and Wisdom** • 2:00pm • In her performance, "So I Heard This Story...", Sheila Starks Phillips will mesmerize audiences young and old weaving tales of wit and wisdom. • Free • University Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-5100

**Mother Goose Time** • 10:15am • 1-12 months • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Toddler Time** • 10:15am • 12-36 months • Free • Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-4675

**Toddler Time** • 10:15am • 12-36 months • Free • Missouri City Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2100

**Mother Goose Time** • 10:15am • 1-12 months • Free • Sugar Land Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2140

**Toddler Time** • 10:30am • 12-36 months • Free • University Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-5100

**Mother Goose Time** • 11:00am • 1-12 months • Free • First Colony Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2800

**Stories & Play** • 2:00pm • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Kinder Korner** • 4:00pm • Free • University Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-5100

**Pajama Night Story Time** • 7:00pm • Free • University Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-5100

**Pajama Night Story Time** • 7:00pm • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

## Ongoing

### TUESDAY

**Mother Goose Time** • 10:15am • 1-12 months • Free • Sienna Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2900



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SMART PERSPECTIVES WE CAN ALL LEARN FROM

# Large Families

By Sarah Lyons



Raising six children has taught me many valuable lessons that have changed my perspective on parenting, housework, finances, and relationships for the better. You do not need to have a big family to live like a big family and use the principles most larger families are forced to apply. Here are some large family perspectives that all families should consider, no matter what size.

## On Time

Time is something we all want more of. The change in perspective here is that large families must use their time more wisely. If there is an hour for cleaning, get up and clean. If there is an hour for playing, make the most of it and enjoy your children. If you have two hours to spend with your spouse, turn off the TV and talk. Put down your cell phone and ask the kids how school went. Rise early in the morning to spend some quiet time alone so you feel refreshed for a busy and full day.

**Benefits for all families:** When time is used wisely, there is more time for the things you enjoy.

## On Disagreements

Large families have to learn to let go of what they cannot control. Moms of many learn that fighting about whether the four and two year old wear coordinating T-shirts or matching socks is not a battle that is worth ruining a day, or even an hour, over. If the child is dressed appropriately for the

weather, then the child is ready to go. This principle can be applied to any relationship, including your spouse. By choosing to let the small things go and work through the important things as a team, there are less disagreements.

**Benefit for all families:** Learn not to sweat the small stuff, which helps create healthy relationships and less stress for everyone.

## On Chores

Working as a team and sharing chores is a necessity for large families to maintain the house. Teamwork is a skill that is valued in school and in the workplace. Kids in large families learn to use teamwork to accomplish tasks and work with others in all situations. Kids also learn how to effectively do chores that they will be expected to take on in adulthood.

**Benefits for all families:** When everyone pitches in the work goes faster and children learn responsibility and skills they will use as adults.

## On Fun

Many large families must stick to a tight budget. Activities like movies and other outings that cost a lot per person are often out of the questions. Large families learn to find the fun in things that are cheap or free, such as a picnic at the park, building a fort in the living room, movie night at home, a dance party, or learning to bake.

**Benefits for all families:** Quality family time and lasting memories can be created at little or no cost.

## On Planning

When you are dealing with a large crowd, planning and organization are key to things running smoothly. As a large family mom, meal planning, a chore schedule, and a well maintained calendar are necessary for our family to thrive. Planning does take time but the results create a less stressful environment for everyone.

**Benefits for all families:** Planning ahead creates less stress.

## On Budgeting

Large families must work with a tight budget and learn to cut costs in creative ways. There are many ways to trim the budget and all families

have to choose what works for them. Some ideas may include cooking from scratch, buying used instead of new, cutting out cable, or taking on household repair projects yourself.

**Benefits for all families:** Learn to spend wisely and save money.

## On Differences

We all realize that each person is different and has their own unique gifts, talents, opinions, quirks, and habits. Larger families learn to embrace differences because their own house is a diverse place. Growing up in this environment creates an appreciation for our differences and teaches kids to be accepting. You don't have to have a lot of kids to know that life is precious and children are a gift. In a large family parents learn to appreciate each child for their unique personality and have the opportunity to teach kids to love and respect each other.

**Benefits for all families:** People should be celebrated and accepted for what makes them unique.

Large families may stumble upon these perspectives out of necessity, but you do not have to have a large family to benefit from them.



## WEDNESDAY

**Preschool Story Time** • 10:00am • Free • George Memorial Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-342-4455

**Toddler Time** • 10:05am • Free • First Colony Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2800

**Toddler Time** • 10:15am • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Preschool Story Time** • 10:15am • Free • Sienna Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2900

**Preschool Story Time** • 10:15am • Free • Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-4675

**Toddler Time** • 10:15am • Free • Sugar Land Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2140

**Toddler Time** • 10:15am • Free • Albert George Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 979-793-4270

**Toddler Time** • 10:30am • Free • University Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-5100

**Mommy Matinees** • 11:00am • Enjoy the latest romantic comedy or action adventure without having to hire a babysitter! Crying babies and rambunctious toddlers welcome. • Santikos Palladium AVX • santikos.com

**Preschool Story Time** • 11:15am • Free • First Colony Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2800

**Preschool Story Time** • 11:30am • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Family Night** • 5:30pm • Free • Chick-fil-A Sugar Land • cfasugarland.com • 281-494-3800

## THURSDAY

**Toddler Time** • 10:00am • Free • George Memorial Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-342-4455

**Toddler Time** • 10:00am • Free • Sienna Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2900

**Toddler Time** • 10:15am • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Toddler Time** • 10:15am • Free • Sugar Land Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2140

**Preschool Story Time** • 10:15am • Free • Missouri City Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2100

**Preschool Story Time** • 10:15am • Free • Albert George Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 979-793-4270

**Toddler Time** • 10:15am • Free • First Colony Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2800

**Preschool Story Time** • 10:30am • Free • University Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-5100

**Preschool Story Time** • 11:15am • Free • Sugar Land Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2140

**Toddler Time** • 11:30am • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Pajama Night Story Time** • 6:30pm • Free • George Memorial Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-342-4455

**Pajama Night Story Time** • 7:00pm • Free • Sugar Land Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2140

## SATURDAY

**Family Story Time** • 10:00am • Free • George Memorial Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-342-4455

**Preschool Story Time** • 10:30am • Free • Missouri City Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-238-2100

**Rise & Shine Family Story Time** • 10:30am • Free • University Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-633-5100

**Story Time** • 11:00am • Free • Barnes & Noble, West Oaks Village • barnesandnoble.com • 281-293-8699 • Barnes & Noble, First Colony Mall • barnesandnoble.com • 281-313-8323


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# RAISING BOYS

Teaching Them to be Good Brothers

by Christa Melnyk Hines



Do your boys prefer to duke it out rather than talk it out? Raising brothers to work out conflict respectfully despite wildly different personalities or fierce competitive streaks can prove challenging. But set a positive example, and you'll find that nurturing brotherly love isn't impossible!

## **Inspire cooperation. Stop bullying behavior.**

"Parenting boys is a lot of fun," says Jenny Brandt, an early education childhood professional, and a mom of two boys, ages 2 and 3 1/2. "Whether they are wrestling in the living room or helping me cook dinner, they bring a different perspective to my life which I greatly appreciate."

Brandt says they started early teaching their sons to cooperate by defining how to play nicely.

"We encourage them to use their words, offer another toy to use, and take turns," she says.

## **Build empathy.**

Brandt fosters empathy between her boys by teaching them to acknowledge each other's feelings. She might say to her older son, Rhett, that Hank looks sad and involve him in finding ways to make his brother feel better.

"Rhett, now on his own, notices that Hank is sad and he'll say: 'Hank do you want me to sing your favorite song?'" she says.

While it is important to give your children space to solve conflicts, intervene if one child is hurting the other, physically or emotionally. Separate your kids and tell the offender that he can rejoin the family when he agrees to treat his brother kindly.

## **Reinforce the positive.**

Describe what respectful behavior looks like. For example, if one child answers a question from his brother with a grunt, explain that to show respect he must answer the question.

"You can say: 'I don't want to talk about it right now.' Just as long as the response is something civil," Sosland says.

Identify times when your children are most likely to squabble, such as when they are tired and hungry. When the car ride home from school became a sibling battleground, Sosland started a

program where her kids earned a poker chip for mutual respect and cooperation. In order to attain the reward of a special outing, her kids had to work as a team to compile an equal number of chips.

## **Encourage healthy competition.**

The good news is sibling rivalry is normal. To keep competition good natured, avoid labeling and comparing one child to the other. Encourage your sons to compete against themselves instead of each other.

"Teach them that it's not about whether you are better than anyone else. It's whether you are doing better than you were at the beginning of the year or at the beginning of the season," says child psychologist Dr. Jane Sosland, who is also a mom to three children, twin sons, ages 18, and a daughter, age 15.

If your son expresses sadness or frustration over a loss, acknowledge the disappointment.

"We all feel disappointment at times. Validate how he feels without trying to convince him

that the way he feels is wrong," Sosland says.

## **Role model.**

Many of us share the funny or frustrating things our kids do with friends and extended family members. But Brandt says this behavior may inadvertently teach our kids that it's acceptable to portray family members in a negative light in front of others.

Make a family rule that you won't embarrass or say negative things about each other in front of people outside of the family. Instead make it a habit to point out the positive things each person does.

You and your partner can also model a respectful relationship to your children through your treatment of each other. Celebrate each other's wins and empathize with each other's frustrations and losses.

Over time, your sons will learn that their brotherhood is unlike any other bond. By honoring and respecting each other's differences, their friendship will last a lifetime.



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# RAISING MONEY

## Savvy Kids

by Christa Melnyk Hines



Kids may not always listen to the life lessons we try to impart, but when it comes to money, they are an amazingly attentive audience. Provide guidance about managing money now and you'll set your children on the course for a lifetime of financial responsibility and long-term security.

**SHAPE SAVVY SPENDERS.** For Megan Lynch, whose daughters are ages 5, 3, and 10 weeks, understanding money is an important life skill. "It took me a really long time to learn to budget and get my credit on track," Lynch says. "I want my girls to know being responsible with their finances will reap better rewards than the instant gratification of just blowing it all."

First, distinguish between wants and needs. Your child will become a more prudent spender, who fulfills needs first and saves for wish-list items to purchase later.

Lynch's girls use a piggy bank to watch their money grow. "We are trying to teach them saving up for something special takes time and patience and in the end, they are always proud of how much money they saved," she says.

**BASIC BUDGETING.** For novice money managers, offer budgeting and planning tips. Trish Batten provides some guidance for her 9-year-old daughter Kendall, but overall she gives her the freedom to make her own decisions about how she spends money.

"Recently she had a goal to save up for a pet, then got invited by a friend to the new American Girl Doll Store," Batten says. "She chose to dip into her money for American Doll items. Her savings for a pet dwindled significantly and she is just now realizing it."

**ALLOWANCE.** This is a great tool for teaching kids as young as four basic budgeting skills. Make the connection between work and earnings by assigning chores that benefit the entire family, like feeding pets or washing the dishes.

Wondering how much to pay? Provide enough allowance each week to cover one of your child's needs, such as lunch money, and a little extra to go towards a want. And no bail-outs here! If your child spends all of his allowance without considering his weekly expenses, natural consequences like brown-bagging lunch for the rest of the week will quickly teach him the value of planning and budgeting his money. If your child wants to earn

more money, offer extra chores for additional allowance.

Talk Family Finances. Early on, lead by example. "Kendall sees when we give to charity, save money, pay bills, use coupons and such," Batten says. "We talk about what we are doing and why we are doing it."

Once your children enter middle school or high school, involve them in family budget discussions to help them understand weekly expenditures. Divide the week's expenses into envelopes. When a child sees money isn't in the budget for the designer jeans she wants, she can save some of her own earnings to purchase the jeans herself.

**SAVINGS.** By the time your kids are 7 or 8-years-old, encourage them to put birthday money or allowance left over at the end of the week into a savings account in their name. With a savings account, children learn about interest and how their money can grow. To get her started, consider matching your child's already accumulated savings.

### WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Check out Financial Fitness for Life Parent Guide

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