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**parent**

**RAISE A  
MONEY  
SAVVY KID!**

THINGS WE CAN  
LEARN FROM  
**LARGE FAMILIES**

**FUN-TIME  
Calendar**

**EDUCATION  
DIRECTORY**

**RAISING  
BOYS!**

**EXERCISE  
WITHOUT SPENDING  
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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 sweet Cover Cutie is 7 year old Katie. She enjoys gymnastics and performing in a local theatre. Her favorite foods are french fries and Skittles. She likes watching her favorite movie, Marmaduke. She loves spending time with her Grandparents.

She loves putting on shows for her family and to play with her dog, Max, a West Highland Terrier. The family loves camping, riding bikes and swimming. She is on the Honor Roll at school and will be performing in a high school production of Beauty and the Beast next month.

Parents Amy and Brian are very proud of their Cutie Patootie!



### Cover Photo By:

Jennifer Stoehr  
Photography

info@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.

### 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



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[www.childrenslighthouse.com](http://www.childrenslighthouse.com)

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Clay Rd.- 281-492-2688

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281-558-CLUB (2582)

## Five Star Montessori School

[www.fivestarmontessori.com](http://www.fivestarmontessori.com)

West Houston - 281-556-6078

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## Holy Covenant Child Development Center

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## Katy Learning Center

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## KiddieAcademy of Grand Harbor

[www.kiddieacademy.com/grand-harbor](http://www.kiddieacademy.com/grand-harbor)

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## The Learning Center at Living Word Lutheran Church

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# Sugar Creek MONTESSORI

## NEW CAMPUS OPENS JANUARY 2017 IN FULSHEAR

We are pleased to announce that Sugar Creek Montessori School - Fulshear campus is opening this month at 4802 FM 1463, just a few minutes from the residents of Cross Creek Ranch, Churchill Farms and Cinco Ranch West. This is the second Sugar Creek Montessori School location in the area, the other being on 7222 Gaston Road in Katy which was founded in 2007. Since inception, the founders and staff of Sugar Creek Montessori Schools have worked to provide Fulshear, Katy, Richmond and surrounding residents an affordable, nurturing and academically challenging school option for their young children.

Sugar Creek Montessori School's original campus was founded in December 1993 to serve Sugar Land area residents. Although the Montessori system of education was founded over 105 years ago by the famous Italian physician, Dr. Maria Montessori, today it is recognized by many to be the most beneficial system of early childhood education.

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different concepts and life skills. The school's advanced curriculum and programs are designed to provide each child with a solid foundation, which will help assist in their educational success later in life. All Primary (3-6 years) and Elementary teachers are Montessori certified by reputable, independent Montessori certifying organizations such as the American Montessori Society. In addition to academic subjects, standard program options include lessons in computers, Spanish, music, art, and physical education. All Toddler classrooms are monitored with security cameras, and the schools' entrance is password-protected.

To learn more about the many advantages an authentic Montessori program can provide for your child, be sure to attend Sugar Creek Montessori School - Fulshear's Open House being held on Saturday, January 21st from 10 am to 1 pm. For more information, call 281-693-7267 or visit [sugarcreekmontessori.com](http://sugarcreekmontessori.com).



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**[www.sugarcreekmontessori.com](http://www.sugarcreekmontessori.com)**



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.



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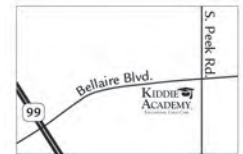


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# The Fun-Time Calendar

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](http://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](http://moodygardens.com) • 800-582-4673

**Jan 2 - 3 • Winter Camp**  
1:30pm-4:30pm • Members \$33/ NonMembers \$38 • The Little Gym of Katy • [tlgkatytx.com](http://tlgkatytx.com) • 281-347-1400

**Jan 3 • Parent's Day Out**  
9:00am • Kiddos run jump and play through 4 hours of FUN! Pre Register Online - \$16.00, Register at the Door - \$20.00 (cash or check only). Ages 3 (potty-trained) & Up. • Westwood Gym, 23333 Taswell Dr, Katy • [westwoodgym.com](http://westwoodgym.com) • 281-347-2000

**Jan 3 • Free Afternoon at Houston Zoo**  
12:00pm • Houston Zoo • [houstonzoo.org](http://houstonzoo.org) • 713-533-6500

**Jan 3 • Family Fun Nights- Ice Skates**  
5:00pm-7:15pm • Kiddo will decorate their cut-out ice skates. \$1.99 Happy Meals between the hours of 5pm-7pm. And don't forget our table service is from 5-8pm Monday- Friday. FREE kiddie cones with meal purchase for the children. • Free • McDonald's of Seven Meadows • [theglasergroup.net](http://theglasergroup.net) • 281-715-2800

**Jan 4 • Small Fries - Winter Hats**  
10:00am-11:15am • Our colorful beanie will be created out of paper and soft cotton balls. FREE small McCafe to any parent who attends. • Pre-K • Free • McDonald's of Spring Green • [theglasergroup.net](http://theglasergroup.net)

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

**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 while bricks. • Free • Barnes & Noble, The Centre in Copperfield • [bn.com](http://bn.com) • 281-861-6842 • Barnes & Noble, West Oaks Village • [bn.com](http://bn.com) • 281-293-8699

**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](http://discoverygreen.com) • 713-400-7336

**Jan 6 • Princess Play Date**  
9:00am • For girls ages 3 (potty trained)-5 yrs. A day of awesomeness filled with dress up, tea party, story time, craft time and much more. Don't forget to pack a lunch. Pre-register online for \$16 or register at the door for \$20. • Westwood Gym, 23333 Taswell Dr, Katy • [westwoodgym.com](http://westwoodgym.com) • 281-347-2000

**Jan 6 • Live Music @ Central Green with The White Stone Band**  
7:00pm • Central Green Park • [centralgreenpark.com](http://centralgreenpark.com)

**Jan 7 • ISEE Testing at The Village School**  
ISEE testing will be going on all day • The Village School • [thevillageschool.com/](http://thevillageschool.com/) • 281-496-7900

**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](http://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](http://housuperbowl.com)

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# The Fun-Time Calendar

January 2017

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

**Jan 7 • Clifford's Good Deeds and Clifford the Big Red Dog Story Time •** 11:00am • Free • Barnes & Noble, The Centre in Copperfield • [bn.com](http://bn.com) • 281-861-6842 • Barnes & Noble, West Oaks Village • [bn.com](http://bn.com) • 281-293-8699

**Jan 7 • Sensory Friendly Screenings •** 11:00am • Brighter Lighting, Lower Sound, Shorter Previews and Accepting Environment. • Santikos Silverado IMAX • [santikos.com](http://santikos.com) • 281-290-0077 • Santikos Palladium AVX • [santikos.com](http://santikos.com)

**Jan 7 • Self-publish your book for free! •** 3:30pm-4:30pm • Want to publish your poetry, novel/memoir, children's book, cookbook or writing journal? Join us for a 1-hour information session. We will cover the basics on cover art, book design, copyediting, technical details, printing and distribution. Get your book project on Amazon, B&N and other online retailers. [host4.evanced.info/harris/evanced/eventcalendar.asp](http://host4.evanced.info/harris/evanced/eventcalendar.asp) • 16+ • Maud Marks Branch Library • [hcpl.net](http://hcpl.net) • 281-492-8592

**Jan 7 • Monster Jam •** 7:00pm • NRG Stadium • [monsterjam.com](http://monsterjam.com)

**Jan 7 • Parent's Survival Night •** 7:15pm • \$30 Members, \$35 Non-Members • The Little Gym of Katy • [tlgkatytx.com](http://tlgkatytx.com) • 281-347-1400

**Jan 9 - 20 • St. Peter's United Methodist Church - Early Childhood Development Center Registration for 2017-2018 •** We offer classes that are developmentally and socially appropriate for children ages 15 months through 5 years of age. • St. Peter's United Methodist Church • [stpkaty.org](http://stpkaty.org) • 281-492-0623

**Jan 9, 23 & 30 • Baby Time •** 10:15am • Free • Katy Branch Library • [hcpl.net](http://hcpl.net) • 281-391-3509

**Jan 9, 23 & 30 • Genealogy Squad •** 2:00pm • Free • Katy Branch Library • [hcpl.net](http://hcpl.net) • 281-391-3509

**Jan 9, 23 & 30 • Teen Time •** 4:00pm • Free • Katherine Tyra Branch Library @ Bear Creek • [hcpl.net](http://hcpl.net) • 281-550-0885

**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](http://discoverygreen.com) • 713-400-7336

**Jan 10 • Family Fun Night- Bingo •** 5:00pm-7:15pm • This has become our tradition to play Bingo for a chance to win a prize!! • Free • McDonald's of Seven Meadows • [theglasergroup.net](http://theglasergroup.net) • 281-715-2800

of Seven Meadows • [theglasergroup.net](http://theglasergroup.net) • 281-715-2800

**Jan 11 • Small Fries - Colorful Winter Trees •** 10:00am-11:15am • These beautiful trees will be made by using buttons to create our Spring like tree. • Pre-K • Free • McDonald's of Spring Green • [theglasergroup.net](http://theglasergroup.net)

**Jan 11 • School-Age Kids Craft •** 4:30pm • Free • Katy Branch Library • [hcpl.net](http://hcpl.net) • 281-391-3509

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

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

**Jan 13 • Boys Play Date •** 9:00am • For boys ages 3 (potty trained)-5 yrs. Boys will run, jump, play and much more. Don't forget to pack a lunch. Pre-register online for \$16 or register at the door for \$20. • Westwood Gym, 23333 Taswell Dr, Katy • [westwoodgym.com](http://westwoodgym.com) • 281-347-2000

**Jan 13 • Live Music @ Central Green with Stephen Chadwick •** 7:00pm • Central Green Park • [centralgreenpark.com](http://centralgreenpark.com)

**Jan 13 • Open Gym •** 7:00pm • Free time for students and non-students to work on any skills or events they would like to have extra time on. Swinging on the bars, jumping on the trampolines or just hanging out with friends. Parents...enjoy a night out. 3 (potty trained)-14 yrs Pre-register online \$16, at the door \$20. • Westwood Gym, 23333 Taswell Dr, Katy • [westwoodgym.com](http://westwoodgym.com) • 281-347-2000

**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! • 3-11 • Free • Lakeshore Learning • [lakeshorelearning.com](http://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. • [housuperbowl.com](http://housuperbowl.com)

**Jan 14 • How Do Dinosaurs Choose Their Pets? Story Time •** 11:00am • Free • Barnes & Noble, The Centre in Copperfield • [bn.com](http://bn.com) • 281-861-6842 • Barnes & Noble, West Oaks Village • [bn.com](http://bn.com) • 281-293-8699

**Jan 14 • 11th Annual MLK Youth Parade Midtown Houston**

• 12:00pm • Midtown Houston, 1300 Holman St. (San Jacinto St. & Elgin St.) • [mlkgrandeparade.org](http://mlkgrandeparade.org)

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

**Jan 15 • 16th Annual MLK Battle of the Bands Competition-Houston •** 4:00pm • W.W. Thorne Stadium, 1715 Aldine Bender Rd, Houston • [mlkgrandeparade.org](http://mlkgrandeparade.org)

**Jan 16 • Parent's Day Out •** 9:00am • Kiddos run jump and play through 4 hours of FUN! Pre Register Online - \$16.00, Register at the Door - \$20.00 (cash or check only). Ages 3 (potty-trained) & Up. • Westwood Gym, 23333 Taswell Dr, Katy • [westwoodgym.com](http://westwoodgym.com) • 281-347-2000

**Jan 16 • 23rd Annual MLK Grande Parade Midtown Houston •** 10:00am • Midtown Houston, 1300 Holman St. (San Jacinto St. & Elgin St.) • [mlkgrandeparade.org](http://mlkgrandeparade.org)

**Jan 16 • Santa's Ranch Open House •** 1:00pm-4:30pm • Come listen to Christmas music. Visit Santa and join the elves in his workshop for fun crafts and other treats. • Maud Marks Branch Library • [hcpl.net](http://hcpl.net) • 281-492-8592

**Jan 17 • Preschool Playhouse •** 9:30am • Core Essentials Value: Knowledge-Chick-fil-A sponsors the Katy ISD Core Essential character values program that teaches kids how to treat others right, make smart decisions & maximize your potential. Enjoy a hands-on experience with Aesop's fable "The Owl and the Grasshopper" as we create an edible scene from the story. Plus, clay dough, singing, dancing and story time. • Free • Chick-fil-A Cinco Ranch • [chick-fil-a.com/cincoranch](http://chick-fil-a.com/cincoranch) • 281-395-1114

**Jan 17 • Family Fun Night-Peace On Earth •** 5:00pm-7:15pm • Celebrating Martin Luther day with peace. • Free • McDonald's of Seven Meadows • [theglasergroup.net](http://theglasergroup.net) • 281-715-2800

**Jan 17 • Family Night •** 5:30pm • Core Essentials Value: Knowledge-Chick-fil-A sponsors the Katy ISD Core Essential character values program that teaches kids how to treat others right, make smart decisions & maximize your potential. Discover something new and learn about Knowledge as you create an Owl bookmark. Plus, complimentary balloon animals and face painting by Sweet Honey the Clown. • Free • Chick-fil-A Cinco Ranch • [chick-fil-a.com/cincoranch](http://chick-fil-a.com/cincoranch) • 281-395-1114



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**Jan 18 • Preschool Playhouse • 9:30am •** Core Essentials Value: Knowledge-Chick-fil-A sponsors the Katy ISD Core Essential character values program that teaches kids how to treat others right, make smart decisions & maximize your potential. Enjoy a hands-on experience with Aesop's fable "The Owl and the Grasshopper" as we create an edible scene from the story. Plus, clay dough, singing, dancing and story time. • Free • Chick-fil-A Mason Rd • chick-fil-a.com/masonroad • 281-579-9460

**Jan 18 • Small Fries - Cute Penguins • 10:00am-11:15am •** Cut and paste shapes to create these adorable little penguins. • Pre-K • Free • McDonald's of Spring Green • theglasergroup.net

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

**Jan 18 • Family Night • 5:30pm •** Core Essentials Value: Knowledge-Chick-fil-A sponsors the Katy ISD Core Essential character values program that teaches kids how to treat others right, make smart decisions & maximize your potential. Discover something new and learn about Knowledge as you create an Owl bookmark. Plus, complimentary balloon animals and face painting by Sweet Honey the Clown. • Free • Chick-fil-A Mason Rd • chick-fil-a.com/masonroad • 281-579-9460

**Jan 19 - 21 • Little Shop of Horrors •** Tompkins High School • tompkinstheatre.com

**Jan 20 • Parent's Survival Night • 6:00pm •** \$30 Members, \$35 Non-Members • The Little Gym of Katy • tlkatytx.com • 281-347-1400

**Jan 20 • Live Music @ Central Green with The Danny Ray Band • 7:00pm •** Central Green Park • centralgreenpark.com

**Jan 20 • Flip Flop Clinic • 7:00pm •** Warm up, basic tumbling, cross tumbling, standing back-handsprings and back-tucks, round-off back-handsprings, layouts, fulls and more. Open to Students & Nonstudents 6-18 yrs. Pre-register \$16, \$20 at the door • Westwood Gym, 23333 Taswell Dr, Katy • westwoodgym.com • 281-347-2000

**Jan 21 - 22 • 28th Annual BBQ & Chili Cookoff • 12:00pm •** Cy-Fair Go Texan Subcommittee dishes up two days of spicy chili, barbecue, brisket, and chicken to benefit the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. • Trader's Village • tradersvillage.com/houston

**Jan 21 • Arbor Day • 10:00am-2:00pm •** Celebrate the Arboretum's 50th Anniversary with a very special Arbor Day! Enjoy free, fun activities for the whole family; including guided tree hikes, woodturning demonstrations, crafts, seed and sapling giveaways, food trucks and more. • Houston Arboretum & Nature Center • houstonarboretum.org • 713-681-8433

**Jan 21 • Nanette's Baguette Story Time • 11:00am •** Free • Barnes & Noble, The Centre in Copperfield • bn.com • 281-861-6842 • Barnes & Noble, West Oaks Village • bn.com • 281-293-8699

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

**Jan 23 • Family Night • 5:30pm •** PJ Party: Wear you pajamas to our PJ Party and decorate a sleep eye mask to catch some Z's. Kids dressed in pajamas receive a FREE Nuggets Kids Meal (4 count). Plus, complimentary balloon animals and face painting by Sweet Honey the Clown. • Free • Chick-fil-A Katy Green • chick-fil-a.com/katygreen • 281-578-7171

**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 • Preschool Playhouse • 9:30am •** Counting Sheep: Create a fluffy sheep with a number line fence to jump. Pajamas optional. Plus, clay dough, singing, dancing and story time. • Free • Chick-fil-A Cinco Ranch • chick-fil-a.com/cincoranch • 281-395-1114

**Jan 24 • Family Fun Night- Winter Wreaths • 5:00pm-7:15pm •** Winter leaf's will decorate our paper wreath. • Free • McDonald's of Seven Meadows • theglasergroup.net • 281-715-2800

**Jan 24 • Family Night • 5:30pm •** PJ Party: Wear you pajamas to our PJ Party and decorate a sleep eye mask to catch some Z's. Kids dressed in pajamas receive a FREE Nuggets Kids Meal (4 count). Plus, complimentary balloon animals and face painting by Sweet Honey the Clown. • Free • Chick-fil-A Cinco Ranch • chick-fil-a.com/cincoranch • 281-395-1114

**Jan 24 • Cocktails and Crayons • 6:30pm-8:00pm •** The Village School's French-English Bilingual Open House • The Village School West Campus • www.thevillageschool.com • 281-496-7900

**Jan 25 • Preschool Playhouse • 9:30am •** Counting Sheep: Create a fluffy sheep with a number line fence to jump. Pajamas optional. Plus, clay dough, singing, dancing and story time. • Free • Chick-fil-A Mason Rd • chick-fil-a.com/masonroad • 281-579-9460

**Jan 25 • Small Fries- Cozy Mittens • 10:00am-11:15am •** Using construction paper and yarn kids will work on their fine motor skills. • Pre-K • Free • McDonald's of Spring Green • theglasergroup.net

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

**Jan 25 • Family Night • 5:30pm •** PJ Party: Wear you pajamas to our PJ Party and decorate a sleep eye mask to catch some Z's. Kids dressed in pajamas receive a FREE Nuggets Kids Meal (4 count). Plus, complimentary balloon animals and face painting by Sweet Honey the Clown. • Free • Chick-fil-A Mason Rd • chick-fil-a.com/masonroad • 281-579-9460

**Jan 27 • Open Gym • 7:00pm •** Free time for students and non-students to work on any skills or events they would like to have extra time on. Swinging on the bars, jumping on the trampolines or just hanging out with friends. Parents...enjoy a night out. 3 (potty trained)-14 yrs Pre-register online \$16, at the door \$20. • Westwood Gym, 23333 Taswell Dr, Katy • westwoodgym.com • 281-347-2000

**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 • kathyhomeandgardenshow.com

**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 • Used Book Sale • 10:00am-4:00pm •** There is a large selection of hardback fiction and nonfiction, as well as children's books and paperbacks. All proceeds will benefit the library. • Maud Marks Branch Library • hcpl.net • 281-492-8592

**Jan 28 • I'll Never Let You Go Story Time • 11:00am •** Free • Barnes & Noble, The Centre in Copperfield • bn.com • 281-861-6842 • Barnes & Noble, West Oaks Village • bn.com • 281-293-8699

**Jan 28 • The Creative Connection • 2:30pm •** Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Jan 30 • Minecraft Monday • 4:30pm •** Register online. • 4th-8th Grades • Free • Cinco Ranch Branch Library • fortbend.lib.tx.us • 281-395-1311

**Jan 31 • Preschool Playhouse • 9:30am •** My Favorite Team: Kids will make a fun football themed centerpiece featuring their family, the best team of all! Plus, clay dough, singing, dancing and story time. • Free • Chick-fil-A Cinco Ranch • chick-fil-a.com/cincoranch • 281-395-1114

**Jan 31 • Family Fun Night- Snow Flakes • 5:00pm-7:15pm •** Let's create our own snow flake for this winter. • Free • McDonald's of Seven Meadows • theglasergroup.net • 281-715-2800

**Jan 31 • Family Night • 5:30pm •** Football Fun: Down, Set, Hut! Come join us in making a wooden stick field goal post to compete in table football games. Plus, complimentary balloon animals and face painting by Sweet Honey the Clown. • Free • Chick-fil-A Cinco Ranch • chick-fil-a.com/cincoranch • 281-395-1114

## Ongoing

### TUESDAY

**Toddler Time • 10:15am & 11:00am • 18-36 months •** Free • Katy Branch Library • hcpl.net • 281-391-3509

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

**Preschool Story Time • 10:15am •** Free ticket is required. First come, first served. • 3-5 yrs • Free • Katherine Tyra Branch Library @ Bear Creek • hcpl.net • 281-550-0885



# 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

[FFFL.COUNCILFORECONED.ORG/PARENTS.PHP](http://FFFL.COUNCILFORECONED.ORG/PARENTS.PHP)

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# SICK-DAY SURVIVAL

Ways to cheer up your kids  
— and preserve your sanity!

By Teri Cettina



## KID COMFORT

**Give good medicine.** Being sick is hard enough — it's nice if the medicine doesn't make your child feel worse. Ask your pediatrician to suggest over-the-counter remedies that are long-lasting or taste good, such as ones that come as lollipops or quick-dissolving strips.

**Don't jump straight to the drugstore remedies, says Neil Schachter, M.D.,** author of *The Good Doctor's Guide to Colds & Flu*. For a cough, start with liquids (like soup, or tea for older kids who like it) to wash away the mucus, and then an old-school antihistamine like Benadryl, which often works better than some newer ones on the market. Only if those don't do the trick should you turn to a cough suppressant.

**Bend some house rules.** Whether that means giving your child some ginger ale or letting her snuggle with the dog on the couch, special privileges can bring comfort and cheer. Kellie Pease, a mom of three in Derby, Connecticut, sets up a sick-day-only snack table next to the living room sofa. "Since they're normally not allowed to eat or drink anywhere but the kitchen, it's a real treat," she says. "It also gets them to eat and drink better."

**Try some home remedies.** Theresa Duda, a mom of three, ages 6, 4, and 2, and a pediatric nurse-practitioner in Portland, Oregon,

swears by warm, steamy baths about 30 minutes before bedtime to loosen chest or nasal congestion and to help relax kids' bodies. If your child doesn't have sensitive skin, a little eucalyptus or lavender essential oil added to bathwater can help open airways and provide a calming effect. (Always store essential oils well out of kids' reach.)

Other easy ways to help your kid feel better, from Patricia Carroll, author of *What Nurses Know and Doctors Don't Have Time to Tell You*:

- For a stuffy or dry nose: Squirt a solution made from 2 cups warm water and 1 teaspoon salt up her nose through a bulb syringe.
- For a sore throat: If she's old enough to gargle, try a mixture of 8 ounces warm water, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1 teaspoon baking soda. (Baking soda cuts the mucus that causes the pain.)
- For sinus pain: Use a heating pad wherever she's feeling pressure. Or make your own by heating water and soaking washcloths in it.

**Make the bed more welcoming.** Give your child several layers of sheets and thin blankets so it's easy for her to peel them off to get cool or cuddle under them to stay warm. Plan on changing the sheets frequently, too. It's more laundry, but a fresh pillowcase just may lull a feverish kid to sleep. The final touch? Stuffed animals set up by your child's feet: Tell

her they're there to watch over her and help her feel better.

## LOW-KEY FUN

**Set up some solo games.** Deliver a pile of junk mail. To someone who doesn't get much mail, free address stickers and catalogs are very exciting. Or hand over a flashlight; a dark room is the perfect theater for light shows and shadow puppets. Tell him when you'll check back to see his show.

**Join in the fun.** Let your child be king of the house for 15 minutes once or twice a day: He gets to give silly commands ("Dance and sing the Hokey Pokey" or "Read me a funny story") as you humbly oblige. Play a game of memory with family photos, or draw a picture together, taking turns adding an arm, then a nose, until it's complete. When you need to get something done around the house, give your child one walkie-talkie while you carry the other one. Share jokes (Over!), describe what you're cooking (Over!), and keep in touch (Over!) throughout the day. More low-tech? Pay bills or fold laundry in his room to keep him company.

**Air them out.** A little fresh air can help a child feel and sleep better. "If he's up and moving inside, he can safely go outside and play a little or take a short walk with you," says Theresa Duda.

**Dote on your healthy kids, too.** Set up an art center in the kitchen, separate from the sick sibling, or let the healthy child choose the video

from time to time. After all, sick days shouldn't be the only time your kids get extra attention. Otherwise, they might start complaining of the sniffles much more often!

## SANTY SAVERS FOR YOU

**Accept a few favors.** Even once your child is past the contagious stage, she'll probably still need to stay home a few days. That's when you may really be looking for a break. Take a friend up on her offer to watch your kids while you soak in the tub or run errands. To lower the chance that your mom friend will catch the bug, ask if she'll give you a quick break after your child's in bed.

**Keep yourself from getting sick.** It's one of life's great injustices that caring for a poor, sick child can lead to a just-as-sick mom. Hedge your bets by washing your hands more than you really think you need to, eat more foods rich in vitamin C, and scoop up those dirty tissues carefully by the edges.

**Embrace the upheaval.** Sick kids whine, complain, and clamp onto your legs as if they're permanent appendages because they simply don't know how to soothe themselves when they're feeling off. Instead of gritting your teeth, give in with as many hugs and cuddles as she needs, and you may be surprised that she stops clinging so much. That's because what kids often want most when they're sick isn't orange juice or cartoons: It's you.

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# Family Dinner

*By Sarah Lyons*



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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# 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.



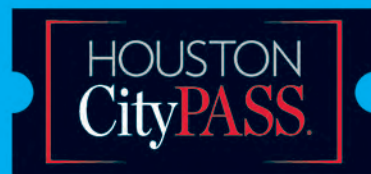
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