

pearland parent

**RAISE A
MONEY
SAVVY KID!**

THINGS WE CAN
LEARN FROM
LARGE FAMILIES

FUN-TIME
Calendar

**10 WAYS TO SIMPLIFY
FAMILY DINNER**

EXERCISE
WITHOUT SPENDING
A DIME!

**EDUCATION
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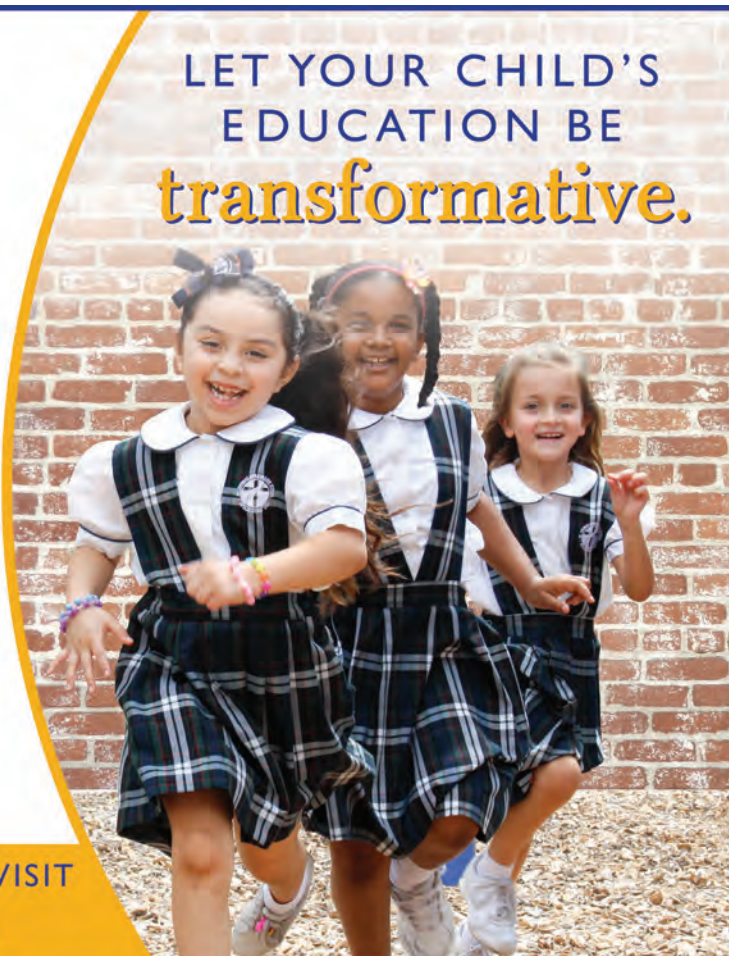
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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

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 Carlisle, Editor

COVER CUTIE

This sweet cover cutie is Scarlett who is turning 1 this month! She enjoys keeping her parents busy by getting into every little thing she can reach. Mom jokes that she's way too smart for her own good. She loves to spend time with her two siblings: Elizabeth (6) and Nathan (3). As a family they like to go to the park and play with their dog, Molly.

Parents Roy & Tara 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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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 4 • Family Craft • 6:30pm
 • Free • Pearland Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 281-652-1677

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 while bricks. • Free • Barnes & Noble Pearland • bn.com • 713-436-1561

Jan 6 • Parent's Survival Night
 • 6:30pm • \$30 Members; \$40 Non-Members •

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 • Clifford's Good Deeds and Clifford the Big Red Dog Story Time • 11:00am • Free • Barnes & Noble Pearland • bn.com • 713-436-1561

Jan 7 • Doggy Reading Time • 2:00pm • Free • Pearland Westside Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 713-436-0995

Jan 7 • Sunset Pontoon Cruise • 3:30pm • Relaxing and educational trip as you observe the wildlife of the bayou. Departs from Bay Area Park. Advance reservations required 281-474-2551 x10 Ages 5-Adult (an adult must accompany children under 18) Fee: \$20/adults; \$15/children & Seniors
DISCOUNTS FOR MEMBERS!
 • Armand Bayou Nature Center • abnc.org • 281-474-2551

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

Jan 9, 23 & 30 • Baby Bounce
 • 10:30am • Free • Pearland Westside Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 713-436-0995

Jan 9, 23 & 30 • Baby Bounce
 • 10:30am • Free • Pearland Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 281-652-1677

Jan 9, 23 & 30 • Cheap Skate Night • 4:00pm • Glide around the ICE for just \$8 per person plus tax.

Includes stake rental. • Discovery Green in Downtown Houston • discoverygreen.com • 713-400-7336

Jan 9 & 23 • Adaptive Recreation: Arts & Crafts • 11:00am • Open to persons with developmental disabilities. Create a piece of art you can be proud to show off or even give away as a gift! Participants must RSVP by Friday before class to lfrench@pearlandtx.gov or 713-540-1615. • 6 yrs & up • Free • Westside Event Center • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8900

Jan 9 & 23 • Adaptive Recreation: Cooking • 11:00am • Open to people with developmental disabilities. Basics of cooking such as measuring, mixing, prepping, baking and many other things. Each participant will take home a cookbook of the items they cooked. RSVP to lfrench@pearlandtx.gov a week prior. • 10 yrs & up • Free • Westside Event Center • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8900

Find even more family friendly events at PearlandParent.com

Jan 9 • Teen Book Club • 12:00pm • Bring lunch to this event. • Free • Pearland Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 281-652-1677

Jan 10 • YA Bookclub • 6:30pm • Free • Pearland Westside Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 713-436-0995

Jan 12 • Adaptive Recreation: Bowling • 1:00pm • Open to all persons with developmental disabilities. Parents, guardians and caregivers must assist those with special needs to make this a rewarding experience. Open to all skill levels. • 10 yrs & up • Free • Alvin Bowling Center • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8931

Jan 12 • Adaptive Recreation: Basketball • 6:00pm • Open to all persons with developmental disabilities. Learn basic basketball skills. Open to all skill levels. Parents, guardians and caregivers must assist those with special needs to make this a rewarding experience. • 8 yrs & up • Free • Pearland Recreation Center & Natatorium, 4141 Bailey Rd. • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8931

Jan 12 • Adaptive Recreation: Wheelchair Football/Basketball • 7:00pm • Open to all persons with physical disabilities who are independent in their wheelchairs. Choose which sport to play. No registration required. • 10 yrs & up • Free • Pearland Recreation Center & Natatorium, 4141 Bailey Rd. • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8931

Jan 12 • Pajama Night • 7:00pm • Kids of all ages are welcome for a time of quiet music, stories, and a bedtime snack. PJs are optional. • Free • Alvin Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 281-388-4300

Jan 13, 20 & 27 • EcoTots • 9:30am • Join our EcoTots classes for toddler and parent activities. Go on guided hikes, make nature crafts and play games. Classes are held each Friday with a new topic every other week. Ages 18 months to 3 years old. Payment is required at the time of reservation. \$8 for members & \$10 for non-members per class (per parent and child combo). Reservations required. Call 713-274-2668. • Armand Bayou Nature Center • abnc.org • 281-474-2551

Jan 14, 21 & 28 • Sunset Pontoon Cruise • 6:00pm • Relaxing and educational trip as you observe the wildlife of the bayou. Departs from Bay Area Park. Advance reservations required 281-474-2551x10 Ages 5-Adult (an adult must accompany children under 18) Fee: \$20/adults; \$15/children & Seniors DISCOUNTS FOR MEMBERS! • Armand Bayou Nature Center • abnc.org • 281-474-2551

Jan 14 & 28 • Pearland Old Town Site Farmer's Market • 8:00am • The 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month. • Zychlinski Park • pearlandoldtownsitesfarmersmarket.com

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 • 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

Jan 14 • How Do Dinosaurs Choose Their Pets? Story Time • 11:00am • Free • Barnes & Noble Pearland • bn.com • 713-436-1561

Jan 14 • 11th Annual MLK Youth Parade Midtown Houston • 12:00pm • Midtown Houston, 1300 Holman St. (San Jacinto St. & Elgin St.) • mlkgrandeparade.org

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

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

Jan 18 • Adaptive Recreation: Goalball for the Visually Impaired • 6:00pm • Participants will play in teams and try to roll/throw a ball that has bells embedded in it into their opponent's goal. Partially sighted participants will be required to wear eyeshades to play. Must RSVP to lfrench@pearlandtx.gov. • 8 yrs & up • Free • Pearland Recreation Center & Natatorium, 4141 Bailey Rd. • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8931

Jan 19 • Toddler Time • 11:00am • Enjoy a lap-sit session for adult and child (age 1-2 years) to listen, play and enjoy brief stories and fun times together. • Free • Alvin Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 281-388-4300

Jan 19 • Adaptive Recreation: Bowling • 1:00pm • Open to all persons with developmental disabilities. Parents, guardians and caregivers must assist those with special needs to make this a rewarding experience. Open to all skill levels. • 10 yrs & up • Free • Alvin Bowling Center • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8931

Jan 19 • D.E.A.R. • 6:00pm • School-age children meet for an hour to Drop Everything And Read out loud from their favorite chapter books. • Free • Alvin Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 281-388-4300

Jan 19 • Adaptive Recreation: Basketball • 6:00pm • Open to all persons with developmental disabilities. Learn basic basketball skills. Open to all skill levels. Parents, guardians and caregivers must assist those with special needs to make this a rewarding experience. • 8 yrs & up • Free • Pearland Recreation Center & Natatorium, 4141 Bailey Rd. • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8931

Jan 19 • Adaptive Recreation: Wheelchair Football/Basketball • 7:00pm • Open to all persons with physical disabilities who are independent in their wheelchairs. Choose which sport to play. No registration required. • 10 yrs & up • Free • Pearland Recreation Center & Natatorium, 4141 Bailey Rd. • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8931

Jan 20 • Parent's Survival Night • 6:30pm • \$30 Members; \$40 Non-Members • The Little Gym of Pearland • tlgpearlandtx.com • 713-340-0042

Jan 21 • School-Age Craft • 11:00am • Origami for Beginners provides basic instruction and materials to create simple paper sculptures. • Free • Alvin Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 281-388-4300

Jan 21 • Nanette's Baguette Story Time • 11:00am • Free • Barnes & Noble Pearland • bn.com • 713-436-1561

Jan 21 • Scrabble Afternoon • 2:00pm • Free • Pearland Westside Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 713-436-0995

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

Jan 23 • Children's Book Club • 12:00pm • Bring lunch to this event. • Free • Pearland Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 281-652-1677

Jan 24 • Westside DIY Preteen Craft Night • 6:30pm • Free • Pearland Westside Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 713-436-0995

Jan 25 • Adaptive Recreation: Paralympic Archery • 2:00pm • Open to all persons with a physical disability. Bring your own bow if you have one however one will be provided for you if needed. You must RSVP by the Tuesday before the class to Lindsay French at lfrench@pearlandtx.gov. • 10 yrs & up • Free • Bass Pro Shop, Pearland • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8931

Jan 26 • Adaptive Recreation: Bowling • 1:00pm • Open to all persons with developmental disabilities. Parents, guardians and caregivers must assist those with special needs to make this a rewarding experience. Open to all skill levels. • 10 yrs & up • Free • Alvin Bowling Center • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8931

Jan 26 • Adaptive Recreation: Basketball • 6:00pm • Open to all persons with developmental disabilities. Learn basic basketball skills. Open to all skill levels. Parents, guardians and caregivers must assist those with special needs to make this a rewarding experience. • Free • Pearland Recreation Center & Natatorium, 4141 Bailey Rd. • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8931

Jan 26 • Adaptive Recreation: Wheelchair Football/Basketball • 7:00pm • Open to all persons with physical disabilities who are independent in their wheelchairs. Choose which sport to play. No registration required. • 10 yrs & up • Free • Pearland Recreation Center & Natatorium, 4141 Bailey Rd. • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8931

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 • Celebrate Arbor Day with KPB Tree Seedling Giveaway • 8:00am • At this event, KPB will be giving away 2 tree seedlings to each Pearland resident who attends (until supplies run out). • Zychlinski Park • mykpb.org • 281-489-2795

Jan 28 • BrazCo Teen Comic Con • 9:00am • Come celebrate comic books, graphic novels and popular culture. This day of fun includes a costume contest, authors, illustrators, crafts and more. • Free • Rodeo Palms Junior High School, Manvel • bcls.lib.tx.us • 281-652-1677

Jan 28 • WinterFest • 10:00am-5:00pm • Come for a fun-filled day of playing in the snow, rides, great food, games and live entertainment. Tickets will be on sale at the RCN. Bring a canned good, to receive a \$2 discount on pre-sale tickets (maximum one discount per ticket) • Pearland Recreation Center & Natatorium, 4141 Bailey Rd. • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8931



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.

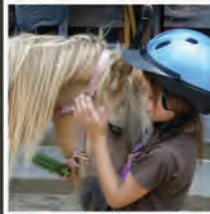
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Jan 28 • Saturday Morning Movie

• 11:00am • Popcorn and a movie for the whole family to enjoy. • Free • Alvin Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 281-388-4300

Jan 28 • I'll Never Let You Go Story Time

• 11:00am • Free • Barnes & Noble Pearland • bn.com • 713-436-1561

Jan 28 • Westside Chess Club

• 2:00pm • No prior chess experience required. • 6-14 yrs • Free • Pearland Westside Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 713-436-0995

Ongoing

TUESDAY

Toddler Time • 10:15am & 11:15am • 18-36 months • Free • Pearland Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 281-652-1677

Toddler Time • 10:30am • Free • Pearland Westside Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 713-436-8600

WEDNESDAY

Mini Moo Playgroup • 9:30am • Story Time and Music in the Playroom at 10:15am. FREE IceDream for all tots! • Free • Chick-fil-A Pearland • cfapearland.com • 713-436-6700

Preschool Story Time • 10:30am • Free • Alvin Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 281-388-4300

Preschool Story Time • 10:30am • Free • Parker Williams Branch Library • hcpl.net • 281-484-2036

THURSDAY

Preschool Story Time • 10:30am • 3-5 yrs • Free • Pearland Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 281-652-1677

Toddler Time • 10:30am • Free • Pearland Westside Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 713-436-8600

FRIDAY

Mini Moo Playgroup • 9:30am • Free • Chick-fil-A East Pearland • cfaeastpearland.com • 281-992-9600

SATURDAY

Breakfast on the Bayou • 8:00am • Enjoy breakfast drifting down the bayou on our pontoon boat. Observe wildlife searching for their breakfast. Watch and learn about bayou life. Enjoy pastries, juice and coffee while underway. The boat will pick up at the Bay Area Park boat launch (NOT at the nature center). Reservations required. Ages 5-Adult (an adult must accompany children under 18). Fee: \$25/adults; \$20/children & seniors. DISCOUNT TO MEMBERS! • Armand Bayou Nature Center • abnc.org • 281-474-2551

Adaptive Recreation: Yoga • 10:00am • Learn Classical Hatha Yoga, mastery of breath and much more. Please RSVP to lissa.giacco@txh.nmss.org or call 281-526-8967 before attending class. • 10 yrs & up • Free • Westside Event Center • pearlandparks.com • 281-412-8900

Mini Musicians • 10:30am • Music and movement to bring families together. • Free • Pearland Westside Branch Library • bcls.lib.tx.us • 713-436-8600

Saturday Train Rides • 11:00am-2:00pm • Train rides aboard our GE 80 tonner locomotive and MoPac caboose! • \$5 w/ admission • Galveston Railroad Museum • galvestonrrmuseum.com • 409-765-5700

Free Crafts for Kids • 11:00am-3:00pm • Free • Lakeshore Learning • lakeshorelearning.com • 281-461-6263

SATURDAY & SUNDAY

Farm Life Demonstration • 1:00pm • Observe life as it once was at the Martyn farm. Each week our knowledgeable volunteers demonstrate activities common to daily life on a 19th-century farm in southeast Texas. These vary from butter and cheese-making to carpentry and blacksmithing. • Armand Bayou Nature Center • abnc.org • 281-474-2551

Natural History Demonstration • 1:00pm • Learn about the animals of Armand Bayou and the habitats they live in. Demonstrations vary from week to week: mammals, birds and reptiles. • Armand Bayou Nature Center • abnc.org • 281-474-2551

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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.

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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.



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