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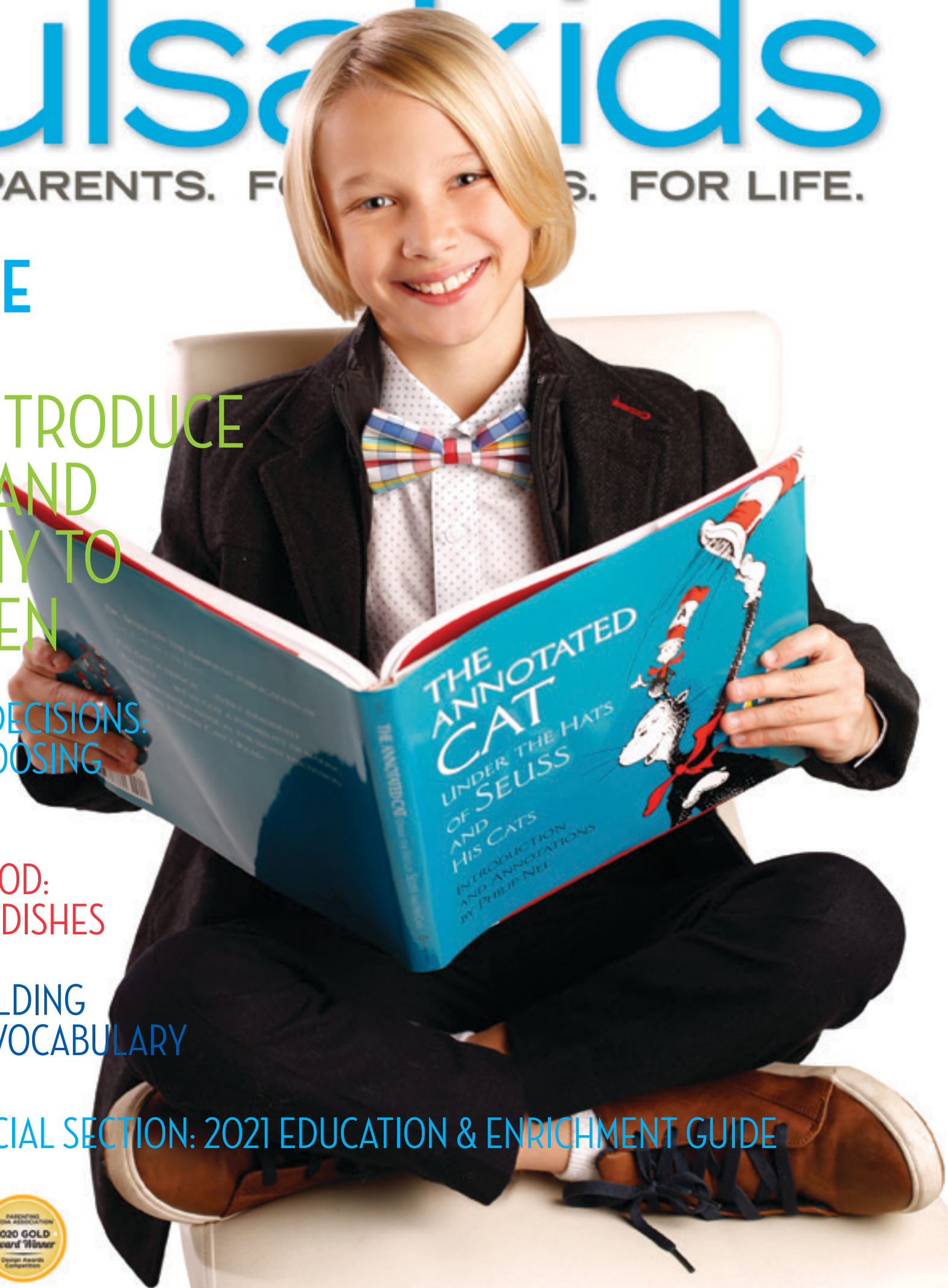
PICTURE BOOKS HELP INTRODUCE TRUTH AND EMPATHY TO CHILDREN

EDUCATION DECISIONS: TIPS FOR CHOOSING SCHOOLS

COMFORT FOOD: WARM PASTA DISHES

TIPS FOR BUILDING EMOTIONAL VOCABULARY

SPECIAL SECTION: 2021 EDUCATION & ENRICHMENT GUIDE



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January 2021

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PICTURE BOOKS HELP INTRODUCE TRUTH AND EMPATHY TO CHILDREN





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Looking Forward to 2021

Like many of you, I wasn't sorry to see 2020 in the rearview mirror. Life was disrupted in so many ways by the pandemic. It's almost mind-boggling to think that at this time last year, we were going about our normal lives. Another major historical event that dove-tailed with the pandemic was the murder of George Floyd, and the subsequent protests against systemic racism that it ignited around the world. If only there were a vaccine for that.

As a small contribution to understanding, TulsaKids teamed up with OSU-Tulsa and the Tri-City Collective for a series of Facebook Live events called "Dismantling Racism." Our January event about the impact of Martin Luther King, Jr. beyond "I Have a Dream" will be on Wed., January 20 from noon to 1 p.m. I hope you will join us.

The pandemic has brought much suffering, but also much creativity, from how students are learning to, in our case, how we have expanded the reach of TulsaKids Magazine by delivering almost 120,000 digital editions into homes with children each month.

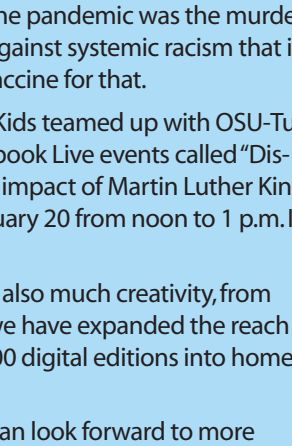
As the vaccine makes its way into our lives, we can look forward to more openings of businesses, schools, places of worship and restaurants, not to mention participating in social activities that we may have taken for granted in the past.

Life for parents certainly doesn't stop. It may have been different last year, but moms and dads are still caring for kids and helping them move toward a bright future. After all, having children assumes a certain belief in the future, that life will be even better for our children as they grow to adulthood. In the face of uncertainty, we may have nothing but hope and the ability to do the small things that improve our lives and the lives of those around us.

As you read this issue, you'll find some comfort in comfort food. Natalie Mikles' recipe column has some delicious, warm pasta meals for the cold month ahead.

And, many of you are spending more time at home with your children. This is an opportunity to teach your children and to share your values. So, when your toddler asks you to read the same book for the one-hundredth time, don't despair. Your child is learning so many important things. Read Quraysh Ali Lansana's piece about reading, and also Mary Beth Ritchie's column about how to maximize your child's experience.

You'll also find our annual Education & Enrichment Guide in this issue. If you're looking for a school, start with this guide, and use the tips in our Choosing a School article to help guide you.



Betty Casey
associate publisher and
editor in chief

If you like to read TulsaKids, you may not know that you can watch us, too! Every Thursday morning on Tulsa's Channel 8, the local ABC affiliate, join Editor Betty Casey on Good Day Tulsa for tips to plan your family's weekend and more. Watch Good Morning Oklahoma on Tuesdays for tips on timely topics and family information you'll want to know.





ON OUR COVER:

COVER KID WINNER EVAN CZARNIAK IS DRESSED FOR WINTER IN A WOOL COAT, LINED WOOL PANTS, SHIRT AND BOWTIE ALL FROM **LOLLY GARDEN CHILDREN'S CLOTHING IN UTICA SQUARE**.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
ANDREA MURPHY PHOTOGRAPHY

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PARENTS INVITED TO APPLY FOR WRITERS' FELLOWSHIP

The Writers' Colony at Dairy Hollow in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, is inviting writers who are parents of dependent children to apply for the My Time fellowship funded by the Sustainable Arts Foundation. Work may be any literary genre: fiction or nonfiction, poetry or prose, script or screenplay. Prior publication is not a requirement.

The fellowship includes a one-week residency at Dairy Hollow and a $400 stipend to cover childcare and/or travel costs. Each writers' suite has a bedroom, private bathroom, writing space and wireless internet. A European-style dinner is prepared five nights a week in the community dining room, and the kitchen is stocked with breakfast and lunch basics.

Applications must be accompanied by a writing sample and a non-refundable $35 application fee. Deadline to apply is Monday, March 15, 2021. For more information and an application, go to www.writerscolony.org/fellowships.





TULSA EDUCARE OPENS NEW CENTER

Tulsa Educare recently opened a new facility, Tulsa Educare-Celia Clinton. Tulsa Educare provides year-round early learning and family engagement for children in under-resourced communities. With the addition of the new center, the Tulsa Educare system can now provide education and care for more than 650 children from 6 weeks old through age 4 with full-day, year-round early childhood education and family support services.

For more information, visit www.TulsaEducare.org.

HAPPY MEALS PROVIDE FUNDS FOR RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

If you notice a one-cent increase in the cost of your Happy Meal this year, that penny is going to a good cause. For every Happy Meal sold in a U.S. McDonald's restaurant during 2021, the additional cent per Happy Meal will help support Ronald McDonald House Chapters and families. To help further the impact, 100 percent of the funds raised with the Happy Meal penny during 2021 will go to local RMHC Chapters. In addition to the donation increase, McDonald's will release a 2021 RMHC- branded Happy Meal box to help further spread awareness of their mission.





PHOTOGRAPHY ARTIST LESLIE HOYT

Our long-time cover photographer, Leslie Hoyt, shot her last TulsaKids cover in December. Over the years, Leslie has photographed the smiling (and sometimes not smiling) faces of children and teens who have graced our covers. Whether it was an uncooperative 2-year-old or a perfect 12-year-old, Leslie was always able to get the shot. She has been honored by the Parenting Media Association (PMA), our professional organization, for her work.

But, like many creative people, she is taking on new imaginative challenges. Moving more toward art photography, Leslie is creating art images that will add a unique design element to homes and businesses. You can see one of her images here, but there are many more incredible works on her website.

We will miss Leslie and her talents, but we wish her well with her new endeavor.

To see more of Leslie Hoyt's fine art, go to https://lesliehoyt.com.

TULSA AUTHOR RELEASES NEW CHILDREN'S BOOK SERIES



Tulsa author Cheryl Alfrey Waldeck has released a series of eight children's historical fiction adventure books designed for young readers ages 6-10. The eight books in the series detail the adventures of a fearless young girl named Meridian Playa who travels through time on the wind. In a flurry of white light and swirling mist, Meridian Playa travels back in time and around the globe, where she experiences the culture, people and sights of each location.

Waldeck hopes to engage young chapter-book readers in Meridian's adventures, while also providing social studies, geography, history and language lessons along the way. Each book culminates with Meridian taking part in a historical event in real time. In the most recent book, Meridain travels to1889 Paris, France, where she climbs to the top of the Eiffel Tower with Gustave Eiffel himself.

Each book contains a map of the country, 20 words in a new language, historically accurate descriptions, illustrations by the author, new words to learn and a recipe for a new food.

"The Adventures of Meridian Playa" books are available at www.cherylwaldeck.com or on Amazon.

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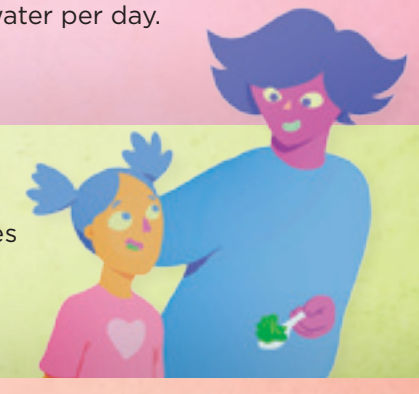
Discover the Power of ONE Healthy Habit

In 2021, the future looks bright. Make the most of it by adding one healthy habit to your daily routine. Before you know it, you'll feel stronger, healthier and more energetic. Get started with one of these activities:



Drink one more glass of water per day.

Fill half your plate with fruits and veggies at each meal.





For a better night's sleep, avoid screen time one hour before bed.

Get 30 minutes of physical activity a day — and make sure your kids get 60!



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BY KILEY ROBERSON

tips for building emotional vocabulary

As human beings, there are so many emotions we experience throughout our lives. Processing those feelings, truly understanding them and what they mean is an important part of personal growth and development. Unfortunately, this hard work of emotional discovery doesn't come naturally. Even the most evolved among us still have moments of caveman tendencies. Don't we all just want to pick something up and throw it when we're really angry? What about feeling like you just want to collapse at the end of a long, stressful day? Yes, we all feel it… but our kids actually do it.

That's right, for young children, when words don't come easily, they often resort to the only way they know how to express their feelings…physically. For pre-school aged children, this can be exceedingly difficult because they are just entering a formal learning environment and atmosphere populated with other youngsters who are also lacking in the self-regulation department. So when the block tower tips over or a coveted toy is picked up by someone else, the tears and tantrums begin. So how can we help our kids find ways to cope? Experts say the best way is to help them find words.

It is vitally important to teach and empower children to use words to express their emotions. But of course, it is not always easy for them. They are still exploring their own feelings and encountering some for the first time.



PARENTS CAN HELP YOUNG CHILDREN EXPRESS EMOTION USING WORDS.

As parents and caregivers, it is important for us to help our kids develop a wide range of vocabulary for their emotions so they can accurately describe how they feel. By using diverse and specific words to describe feelings, you can increase your child's emotional vocabulary and give them many words they can use to describe how they feel in order to express themselves.

By intervening and teaching our kids how to expand their emotional vocabulary, they understand the subtlety of emotions. They learn that there is a wide range of emotions between good and bad and that each emotion has its corresponding causes and consequences. They also learn how to use the most appropriate words that can best describe their situation instead of throwing tantrums or resorting to violence to get attention. And at the same time, we get to support their emotional health development from early childhood to their adult lives.

So how do you get started helping your children build a big and robust emotional vocabulary? The American Academy of Pediatrics has the following recommendations.

Help explain the feeling– Start by labeling the feeling using easy words that they can understand. You can use picture books to pair emotions with facial expressions, as well. Doing this will help them put a word to describe exactly how they feel instead of speechlessly crying or relying on tantrums.

Talk about your own feelings – Remember to also lead by example. Talk about your own feelings and show how you express those emotions. As a parent, you are your children's greatest role model. They will mimic how you speak and what you're doing. So, be careful with how you express your emotions especially when you are frustrated or angry.

Examples of feeling words– Try replacing some common feeling words with new ones to help grow your child's vocabulary.

- Instead of saying, "I am feeling good," teach them to say "I am –": delighted, loved or contented
- Instead of "I feel sad," try "I am –": uncomfortable, worried or concerned
- Instead of "I am angry," try "I am –": embarrassed, overwhelmed or annoyed

Enriching your child's emotional vocabulary is a helpful way for them to put a label on their feelings and take control of their actions. It also helps build a strong sense of self at a tender age, which can definitely help your child succeed later on.

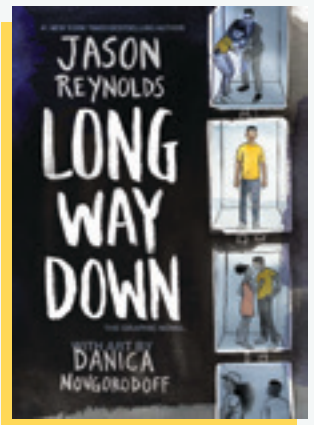
Mr. Henry's Books

EDUCATOR WORKSHOP

Virtual via ZOOM **Saturday, Feb. 27, 2021**
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Attention, middle-school and high-school teachers and librarians!

You are invited to this virtual continuing-education workshop focusing on the works of famed author Jason Reynolds, winner of the 2021 Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers' Literature.



You will:

- Receive 50 copies of *Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds for your students to keep as their own.
- Learn how to incorporate various elements of *Long Way Down* into your classroom and receive lesson plans on how to use Jason Reynolds' works in a variety of school subjects.
- Be introduced to the Tulsa City-County Library's Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers' Literature.
- Gain an opportunity to win a virtual classroom visit by Jason Reynolds on Thursday, May 6, 2021.

Tulsa City-County Library · tulsa Library Trust · tulsakids

Registration Deadline: Friday, Feb. 12, 2021

Register at: www.tulsalibrary.org/mr-henrys-books-registration

Every participant will receive their copies of *Long Way Down*, as well as an official continuing-education certificate, after the workshop by picking them up at their neighborhood Tulsa City-County Library location.

A drawing will be held among participants for four classroom sets of the newly released graphic novel version of *Long Way Down*.

Participants must be employed by a school district within Tulsa County.

Mr. Henry's Books is a program of the Tulsa City-County Library, sponsored by the Tulsa Library Trust, made possible by a grant from the Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation.

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BY MARY BETH RITCHIE

make reading with your child a new year's resolution

As we approach the beginning of a new year, many will consider making resolutions. One of the most valuable resolutions you might consider making this year would be to read aloud to your children every day. This particular resolution will provide your child with many emotional and educational advantages. Additionally, it will build the bond between you and your child. It can also be a lot of fun!

Many parents of school-aged children stop reading aloud to them because the children have learned to read independently. Don't let this stop you! There are still many benefits to this pleasurable activity. At this age, you may want to include chapter books. These books will provide more complex plots and advanced vocabulary. Be sure to discuss what you're reading. This will help to develop critical thinking skills that will be needed as children transition from the "learning to read" stage to the "reading to learn" stage. The conversations about what you are reading are just as important as the actual time spent reading. This not only increases the potential for bonding, but it can also help with cognitive skills and critical thinking. Ask open-ended questions such as, "What do you think might happen next?"

Books can also assist with social-emotional learning. There are often lessons and life skills to be learned from books. Help your child learn to identify these. Characters may be dealing with some of the same issues as your child. This helps to normalize their feelings and experiences. It also opens the door for discussions between parents and children. Open-ended questions can be helpful with this, too. Try asking questions such as, "How do you think that character feels right now?", or "What would you do in this situation?" These conversations may also contribute to building a strong sense of empathy in your child.



READING WITH YOUR CHILD BUILDS MULTIPLE SKILLS – AND IT'S FUN!

Sharing a book with your child is an intimate experience that helps to strengthen the bond between you. There is a physical intimacy because you are usually in close proximity while reading. There is also an emotional intimacy as you share the book together. Books offer opportunities to discuss a wide variety of things that might not normally come up in conversation. Children are exposed to subjects and situations that they may not encounter in their own lives. This can help to broaden their understanding of the world. Discussing these topics will serve to strengthen the bond between you and your child.

Sharing books with your children will also increase their vocabulary. The language of books is different from our everyday oral language. It's much more rich and descriptive. This enhanced vocabulary will lead to improved language and writing skills. These abilities will be advantageous for your children in the academic and professional worlds.

Reading to your children can also help to develop their listening skills, attention spans, and imaginations. These qualities will serve them well in school and in life beyond the classroom. Success in the classroom demands strong listening skills. Some suggest that the time spent reading together will help your child to develop an increased attention span as they focus on the stories. With each new school year, your child will need an increased attention span and improved listening skills. Literature opens up a whole new world in the imagination. Developing the imagination will help to cultivate creativity, a desirable quality in many areas of life.

continued next page

Developing the habit of reading to your children will result in your child associating reading with pleasure. This can help your child to develop a love of learning, which will promote the lifestyle of a lifelong learner. This is one of the most important qualities needed throughout life. Success in any field depends on continuing to learn.

Are you convinced of the numerous benefits yet? How will you go about creating a plan? You may want to establish a special time for reading. Make it part of a daily routine. I chose to read with my children right before bed each night. It was a pleasant and relaxing activity that was part of our bedtime routine. You will likely find that your children look forward to this time each day. They will enjoy your undivided attention as much as the stories. You do not need to own an extensive personal library at your home, although you will certainly want to have some of your favorites. Make use of your local library. Choose a combination of fiction and nonfiction books. Librarians will be happy to help you find books that your child will enjoy. Most importantly, make this time fun! You want to instill a love of reading, so it's important that your child enjoy the experience. Don't be shy. Use funny voices for the characters to help bring them to life!

When contemplating your resolutions this year, I hope you will consider reading to your children every day. The benefits are undeniable and can last a lifetime. You will be fostering a love of reading and learning in your children. You will be contributing to their success in school and in life. The relationship between you and your children will be strengthened as you have fun sharing books together. Turn the page to Chapter 2021 with this valuable New Year's resolution!



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BY JULIE WENGER WATSON

exercise: a pandemic prescription

There's no way around it. 2020 was a stressful year. Although the arrival of the Coronavirus vaccine is in sight, experts say it will be some time before things "return to normal." In the meantime, many of us, including teenagers, are struggling with anxiety and depression brought on or exacerbated by the pandemic. While there are many things we simply can't change right now, there are some basic steps we can take to keep our families and ourselves healthy. Exercise is one of them.



EXERCISE BOOSTS PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH.

Exercise & adolescents

Most of us are well aware of the importance of exercise for weight control, disease prevention, and mood regulation. Physical activity is particularly critical for adolescents at a time when long hours in front of a computer screen and decreased social interaction define the pandemic lifestyle. Not only does it keep them physically fit, it's a natural boost for mental health. Studies show a sedentary lifestyle is associated with a greater risk of depression by the age of 18.

Exercise during a pandemic

The Centers for Disease Control recommends 60 minutes of daily exercise for teens. With most organized team sports on hold and access to gyms limited, this is a tough time to get moving. Shifting your fitness focus to the great outdoors can help. Exercising outside is not only a safer way to interact with others right now, studies show that "green exercise" also reduces anger and depression and improves mood. Think biking, hiking, walking, running and even jumping rope.

Fortunately, Tulsa offers a variety of public spaces suitable for all kinds of physical activity.

"The outdoor recreational component here is bar none," notes Joel Koester, director of sport sales for Tulsa Sports Commission/Tulsa Regional Chamber. "It's one of the best infrastructures I've seen in my travels. You've got this amazing trail system that runs right next to the Arkansas River. Whether you run, bike, or hike, there are just so many opportunities to get out and enjoy yourself. In addition, The Gathering Place offers something for everyone. I've never seen anything like it."

Dress for success

Ice, wind, rain, snow, and even an occasional balmy day - winter in Oklahoma is unpredictable at best. With the right wardrobe, however, your teen can brave the elements. Layers are key for staying dry, warm and comfortable. Some type of "wicking" fiber, like silk, a wool/cotton blend or a synthetic material like polypropylene is best next to the skin. Avoid all-cotton t-shirts. They can get soggy and cold. The next layer should be something like a loose-weave wool sweater to trap air. For colder weather, add an additional layer, like a polar fleece. Finally, a breathable layer made of water resistant material helps protect against wind, wet and extreme cold. Don't forget a hat, mittens and wool blend socks on particularly cold days. Add a facemask or a scarf, as needed, then get out and go.

RESOURCES

Riverparks.org.

Check out this website for an overview of Tulsa's trail system, including Turkey Mountain, and printable maps.

Gatheringplace.org.

Find hours, Covid-19 updates and details about the Sports courts, Skate Park and BMX Pump Tracks for this 66.5-acre park.

Oxleynaturecenter.org.

Explore miles of free hiking trails at both Oxley and sister park, Red Bud Valley.

Parks.tulsacounty.org.

A guide to Tulsa's park system, including the 192 acres of Chandler Park where you can climb rocks and hike trails.

Incog.org.

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BY QURAYSH ALI LANSANA

PICTURE BOOKS HELP INTRODUCE TRUTH AND EMPATHY TO CHILDREN

"In Greenwood, we have everything we need, and it might surprise you to know that everyone looks like me." from **Opal's Greenwood Oasis**

Picture books are among the greatest resources in an elementary teacher's toolbox.

There were few picture books in my home as a child, except for those I checked out from the public library. They were too expensive and too non-essential for my lower-working class parents' budget with six children. Food and electricity provided enough struggles. But they believed in fostering better lives for their children, and education was at the top of the list. We owned a complete Encyclopedia Britannica set, which was paid for on layaway.

Like many people, I was introduced to picture books in kindergarten at reading time. Mrs. Cobles guided us to the numbered rug to sit, and we drank in the stories and images she conjured. As the youngest of six, I knew words had power from my older siblings, church and 1970s Soul, Funk and R & B music. I just couldn't spell most of those words quite yet.



QURAYSH ALI LANSANA, POET, AUTHOR, EDUCATOR

But stories and images took me to places and time periods far removed from Enid. They offered me the ability to dream, to imagine. This is one reason why picture books are important, and you don't have to wait until a child is school-aged to read to them.

Dr. Vanessa LoBue, in a 2019 article for Psychology Today, writes "…besides talking to children, reading to them aloud also likely exposes children to new and different words that parents don't often use regularly in everyday speech. Along these lines, studies have shown that the number of words infants produce and understand is predicted by how much they are read to. Besides benefits for word exposure, there is also evidence that babies can learn specific content from books, which can begin even before a baby is born. In fact, researchers have found that babies can learn the rhythm of a specific storybook in the third trimester of pregnancy."

Though babies in the womb are unable to see the illustrations, parents often describe what the images detail in their reading and the images color the manner in which the words are rendered.

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Parents, your words matter, at every age and stage of a child's development.

My career in education officially began in the early 1990s in Chicago. I was a teaching artist with a Chicago Public Schools vendor license a few years before the city would become known as the birthplace of contemporary Arts Education, in part due to the elimination of art teachers among the rank and file. I hated that art teachers were the victims of budget cuts, as many were friends and art's a critical pathway to understanding and respecting other cultures. But I loved the freedom to develop my lesson plans, in partnership with units of study, to help teachers further the learning experience for their students. I could inform my curricula with language arts, creative writing, art, music, current events, history and more.

The spark that gave birth to *Opal's Greenwood Oasis*, my new children's book, was ignited in an eighth-grade classroom at Donoghue Elementary School on Chicago's southside in 1995, 25 years ago.

Voicing the margins, the under-explored aspects of the histories of people of color and otherwise marginalized humans, has been a driving force in my life since I was an undergraduate journalism student at OU in the early 1980s. It was there I began to comprehend the tenuous tether between yesterday and today. My teaching work in Chi-town only solidified the idea that we cannot arrive at *now* without understanding the who, what when, where, why and how the journey began in the first place.

One of my tasks at Donoghue was to make Civil War History, a required component of U.S. History units, tangible and accessible for Black teens growing up in a neighborhood grappling with daily survival. I chose to focus on Harriet Tubman, her life, work and womanhood. I dug deeply into researching Tubman to discover that only two books that detailed her truths existed at the time. There were hundreds of fictionalized accounts of her life and story, but only two real books of biography. I didn't want Harriet to live in the land of Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. She was flesh and blood, woman and Black.



OPAL'S GREENWOOD OASIS (THE CALLIOPE GROUP, FEB. 2021), COAUTHORED BY QURAYSH ALI LANSANA AND NAJAH-AMATULLAH HYLTON AND ILLUSTRATED BY SKIP HILL, IS A CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK ABOUT THIRD-GRADER OPAL BROWN, WHOSE FAMILY LIVES IN PRE-RACE MASSACRE GREENWOOD. OPAL RIDES HER BIKE AROUND GREENWOOD, HELPING HER FAMILY PREPARE FOR THE COMMUNITY'S MEMORIAL DAY PICNIC.

The students and I engaged in a series of kinesthetic, oral and written exercises examining the human, political and geographical realities Harriet might have endured on her journeys. We discussed the weight, both personal and social, of her work. We explored the climate of chattel slavery and legislated racism in which she led hundreds of enslaved Africans to freedom. We checked weather charts and topographical maps along her many routes to the Promised Land. We wore her skin. The students thrived. We had localized and found agency for a history hundreds of years gone. These students found the tether between yesterday and today, and I became enraptured by Tubman for the next several years. *They Shall Run: Harriet Tubman Poems* was my graduate school thesis and my second book of poetry.

You don't have to be a multi-degreed person to do this. You just have to be open to a history that is inclusive of all involved. You just have to be open to truth. Picture books help adults introduce truth and empathy to children.

Opal's Greenwood Oasis is a picture book that explores the rich, vibrant history of Black life in the Greenwood District prior to its destruction. My coauthor, Najah-Amatullah Hylton, and I chose to highlight Black excellence over Black pain. We chose to end the story just prior to the Tulsa Race Massacre because we believe the horror and violence was too much for the age group to ascertain.

Opal has just turned eight. She has just learned to ride her bike and has newly gained the trust of her parents that she can navigate the neighborhood on her own. This is a universal childhood experience. This transcends ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation. The beauty of picture books is the grounding in the familiar.

Opal feels safe and loved in her community. There are folks who are not kin that look out for her, who question why she is on her own on her bike. Opal is running an important errand for her mother, her family. She is being helpful to her mother.

Books are written to encourage critical thinking, to ask questions, to learn about history or different ways of thinking. Miss Gwendolyn Brooks, the first Black person to receive the Pulitzer Prize and one of my mentors, said "Art should move us to think, not tell us what to think. We have enough pundits, preachers and politicians who try to tell us what to think." As parents, you have the ability and responsibility to mold your children's consciousness.

AUTHOR BIO:

Quraysh Ali Lansana, poet, author, educator, is a Tulsa Artist Fellow, Writer in Residence and adjunct professor at OSU-Tulsa, a former faculty member of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and The Juilliard School. His most recent titles include Those Who Stayed: Life in 1921 Tulsa After the Massacre and Opal's Greenwood Oasis. He is a member of Tri-City Collective.

BY DENISE YEARIAN

tips for choosing schools

The pandemic has thrown students, parents and teachers into an educational maelstrom. In this unique time, families are more often focusing on just holding on today rather than looking to the future. Regardless, how children are being educated has become the focus of worldwide attention. Teachers have become heroes as they create new ways to reach their students, and parents have more appreciation for the role of schools in their lives. If you are looking at schools, consider these tips.



1. Get real with recommendations

Get input from other parents you know and trust. At the same time, realize there is no perfect school or one-size-fits-all academic setting. Every school has a different flavor, and one is not necessarily better than another. It's that one may be a better fit for your child than another. Listen to other parents, but also realize that your child may have very different needs than their children.

2. Consider your child's individuality

Take in to account your child's strengths, weaknesses, interests and talents. Also mull over what sort of learning environment your child would be most comfortable in. Self-motivated learners, for example, may do well in a program where they get to direct and carry out their own learning. But a child in need of constant direction might be more suited to a structured environment.

3. Make a list

Write down what you are looking for in a school. Be specific about ambiance, class size, teaching style, curriculum, the role of art and music, homework and where parents fit in the running of the school. Then prioritize your list. Some things, such as class size, a strong art program or religious affiliation, may be non-negotiable. Other things would be nice but not necessarily mandatory.

4. Research options

Check out schools' websites, or call and ask for more information. Consider each one's program, mission, services, faculty and administration. What makes the school unique? What is its teaching philosophy? Is there a vision for the future? Is there anything the school does particularly well? What about the curriculum? Will it cater to your child's talents, interests, temperament and learning style?

5. Don't let cost limit you

Look at a school, even if you don't think you can afford it. Many academic institutions offer scholarships or have financial aid based on need, so ask about it. At the same time, ask about what financial expectations may exist beyond just tuition.

6. Go the distance, if needed

A ride as far as 30 minutes may be worth it if the school has an environment where your child will be happy and thrive. Look for someone to carpool with. Or use that distance to let your child study or spend quality time together.

7. Schedule a visit

This may be difficult due to Covid guidelines, but if you can, arrange to visit schools that meet your initial criteria. This will give you a feel for the school's academic and developmental philosophy. Note, however, that even schools which adhere to like-minded philosophies can be tremendously different. A school that seemed to be the perfect fit on the internet, on paper or phone may prove otherwise once you have visited. And the school you weren't initially drawn to may be the "one." That's why it's important that you go. Test it. Feel it. See what it is like.

8. Meet with authorities

While visiting, spend a few minutes talking with the principal or school administrator. Discuss your child's needs and ask if the school can meet those needs. Ask about discipline policies, and expectations.

9. Make observations

If possible, sit in on classes and observe the teachers and students. Write down obvious facts such as school and class size, diversity, ambiance as a whole and within individual classrooms, absence or presence of a dress code and general demeanor of the students and teachers. Also take note of the students' attitudes and emotions. Did they appear

continued next page

comfortable and relaxed, or anxious and uptight?

10. Ask for references

If you haven't already done so, get names of several parents whose children attend the school that would be willing to talk with you. Find out what they do and don't like about the school. If you can, obtain a few names of parents who were not happy with the school and enrolled their children elsewhere. All schools have success stories, but no school works for every child. Finding out about a child who did not thrive there can give you a balanced perspective.

11. Get your child's take

Return to the schools that meet your criteria and bring your child with you. Have him or her meet the teacher, and if possible, spend time in the classroom with the other students. What was his or her reaction? Did your child seem comfortable with the school? The teacher? Other students?

12. Follow your intuition

You know your child better than anyone else. If you have done your homework, you'll know if it's the right school for your child. Sometimes it's not necessarily a specific program or academic feature that lets parents know it's a good match. It's that intangible feeling—that visceral reaction. They know this is a place where their child can grow and academically succeed.

Questions to Ask When Considering a School

What is the school's teaching philosophy? Is it accredited?

What kinds of books are the children expected to read? Who chooses them?

How and when is writing and composition taught? Is there time for creative writing?

Is the curriculum established or does it emerge from the students' interests?

How often do the children use textbooks? Workbooks? Worksheets?

When do children start getting homework? How much at what grades?

How are the children assessed?

When does computer/technology education start, and what does it involve?

What extracurricular activities are offered? Is there an extra cost?

How much time is spent on art, music, drama and physical education or athletics?

Are there opportunities for students who are advanced in certain subjects to move ahead, and are students who are struggling provided with special tutoring or individualized help?

If the school is a high school, are there AP and honors classes available?

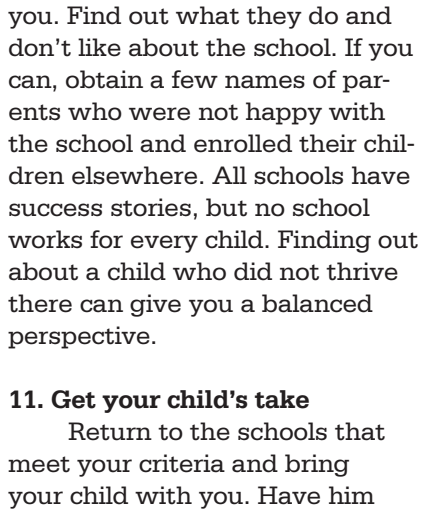
Are there many opportunities for cooperative learning? Inquiry-based learning? Projects?

How is discipline for improper behavior carried out? What is the code of conduct? What about online conduct?

What qualifications do the teachers have?

Who makes decisions about the school?

What level of parental participation is allowed? What is the expected level of parental participation?







BY REP. JOHN WALDRON

lucy and ethel in middle school

This year, I've been fortunate enough to stay at home while my child experiences virtual learning at Edison Middle School. As a former teacher, I am fascinated by the process, and deeply grateful for his wonderful teachers and the work they are doing. But I am also concerned about the pressure the virtual approach puts on the children. I see my son working through weekends and breaks and still not keeping up – and I know he is not the only one. Being a teacher has never been harder. They have to do everything they ever did, but in many cases they now do it online, while learning a dizzying array of new systems. So I've tried to use my two viewpoints – teacher and parent – to express my assessment of the picture. If I was still teaching, this is what I would use to shape my approach.



Lucy and Ethel at the Chocolate Factory. In a famous episode of I Love Lucy, Lucy and Ethel get a job wrapping chocolates on an assembly line – but the line moves too fast, with hilarious results. It's less amusing in a school setting. Children in middle school can receive dozens of assignments each week. Many of them are small assignments and exit tickets. Some of them are very big and take hours. The pace of the work is unrelenting. So if a student falls behind on one, it becomes very difficult to make it up because a new wave is always coming in.

The Anna Karenina Principle. Successful students are all alike; each unsuccessful student is unsuccessful in their own way. Some of these ways could include: lacking adequate technology or wi-fi access; living in a noisy house; the absence of strong parental support; a disorganized approach to learning; a tendency towards perfectionism, which keeps them from completing assignments; an unwillingness to ask for help when confused, and so on. In an ordinary classroom, a teacher has the chance to observe students and help them overcome these obstacles. This is much harder in a virtual setting.

The homework arms race. As a former teacher in a competitive school, I know that teachers often competed for the attention of their students. I wanted my classes to be rigorous – but so did my colleagues. If we all assigned heavy work simultaneously, the kids would be overwhelmed. But if I relented unilaterally, the space I created might just be taken up by another teacher's workload. It's hard as a teacher to see the workload from the student's viewpoint, because we have only our own perspective. It helps when teachers meet by grade levels to compare notes, but we don't always give teachers the time and the flexibility to do that. We should.

Everything takes longer than you think online. The virtual setting presents an array of new challenges. Art projects have to be photographed and emailed before they can be uploaded. Math assignments might involve more than one platform. Edmentum, Canvas and other systems all have their own quirks, and learning these systems takes time. Think about plotting points on a graph in math class. Now try doing it with text boxes and a cursor. Students end up spending much of their time learning systems, so the same number of math exercises takes much longer online.

Less is more. The real goal of education is to open minds up to new ways of thinking and expressing. But modern data-based education systems tend to value task compliance. Since we can measure how many tasks a student checks off, we see that as a measure of progress. But I would challenge educators to slow down and allow students more time to think. It's often the empty spaces between assignments that produce the best learning. They don't have much empty space right now.

Readers, don't be too hard on teachers right now. They really need a break. And parents, don't be too hard on yourselves. I know it can feel like your family is the only one struggling with this. But until we deal with COVID-19 as a society, we're going to have to learn how to adjust to it. If that means figuring out how to do virtual education well, then so be it. I have faith in the excellent teachers in our public schools. They'll find a way to make it work, as they have always done. In the meantime, let's all be patient.

John Waldron is an Oklahoma State Representative, former teacher and a dad.

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What's Going On(line)?

CONTESTS AND GIVEAWAYS

WIN CAR PAYMENTS FOR A YEAR!

From January 11-February 8, enter to win Car Payments for a Year ($6,600 value)! The entry link will be available at tulsakids.com/contests.



TULSAKIDS' VIRTUAL SCHOOL FAIR

We will be highlighting local schools and extracurricular options in our first virtual school fair on January 13! Learn more by RSVP-ing to our Facebook event page at facebook.com/tulsakidsmagazine.

January 13

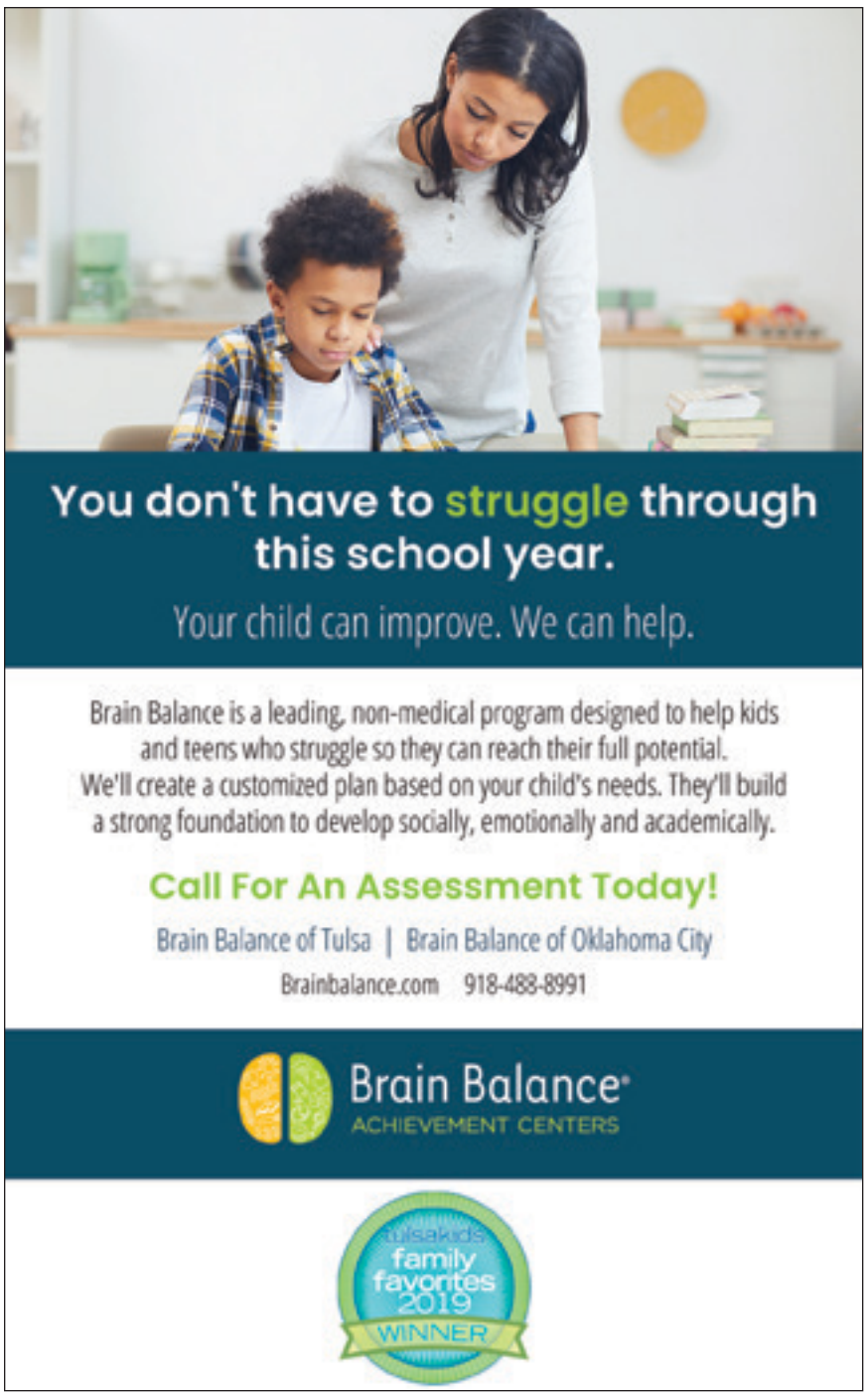
RSVP to our event page at facebook.com/tulsakids-magazine



WEBSITE UPDATE

TulsaKids.com has a new menu item! Now, you can find stay-home activities at tulsakids.com/fun-for-kids. We've got crafts, games, interesting facts and more!





BY LAURA RAPHAEL, MA, MLIS, CHILDREN'S SERVICES COORDINATOR, TULSA CITY-COUNTY LIBRARY

magic trick: art, reality, and books to treasure

MEET ZACHARIAH OHORA ON JANUARY 22 FOR "BOOKS TO TREASURE"

Something magical happens when you page through a picture book. Sure, the visual images make a story come to life – that's pretty magical. And, yes, sharing picture books with your child can create beautiful moments of joy and wonder, a magic trick you will want to share again and again.

No, the actual inexplicable, mind-bending magic recently revealed by cognitive science is that what your eyes see, your brain believes is reality.

The elephant on the picture book page lifting its massive trunk? Your elemental brain totally thinks the elephant is flesh and blood in front of you.

Same with illustrations of a desert landscape, laughing babies, or a redheaded girl yelling at a huge bear in a green shirt. Your eyes see and your brain registers: desert, babies, girl and bear. Sophisticated brain scans and scientific studies prove this odd evolutionary trick: The same regions of the brain that light up when you see an actual object in real life also light up in exactly the same way as when you see an artistic representation of that object.

In other words, art is magic!

When the Tulsa City-County Library partnered with the Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation nearly 20 years ago to develop the Books To Treasure program, the scientific connections between reality and art in the brain wasn't the driving force. But the idea that "art is magic" definitely was!



ZACHARIAH OHORA

Because one other magical thing happens when children are surrounded by books with beautiful illustrations and supporting text -- they become better and more fluent readers.

Every year, as part of Books To Treasure, an outstanding children's book illustrator is invited to speak in Tulsa, a free copy of his or her book is given to every second grader in Tulsa and Tulsa County, and all second graders are given the opportunity to apply for a special library card with artwork from that illustrator.

For 2020, **Zachariah OHora** is our illustrious illustrator, his delightful moral tale "Horrible Bear!" is what every second grader will receive, and the library card shows the final scene of reconciliation between redheaded girl and bear.

Five Things To Know About Books To Treasure This Year

1. The program says 2020, but everything won't take place until 2021. Because of the pandemic, the library has had to delay a few things related to Books To Treasure, including book delivery to schools and the final public presentation by Zachariah OHora.

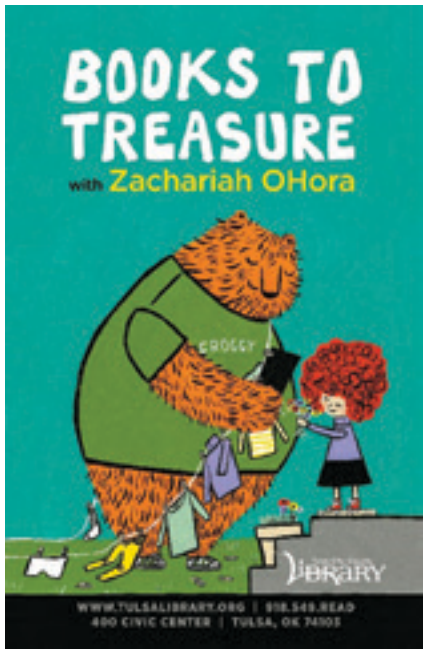
2. See Zachariah OHora on January 22! Zachariah OHora will "visit" Tulsa virtually for a live presentation on the library's YouTube channel. Check out www.youtube.com/tulsalibrary on Friday, January 22 at 7 p.m. to see Zachariah talk about his inspirations and share his artwork – both recent and his childhood creations!

3. All second graders in Tulsa and Tulsa County can get a special library card online. If you have a second grader, you can apply for a special Books To Treasure library card online at www.tulsalibrary.org/kids/books-to-treasure and it will be mailed to you. You can also go to any of the 24 library locations to apply for a Books To Treasure library card for your second grader.

4. Books! Books! Books! Copies of "Horrible Bear!" are being delivered to schools this month to distribute to second graders, but if your child is in homeschool, virtual school, or somehow missed the school delivery, parents can also pick up books at any of our 24 library locations.

5. You can find a ton of extra resources for learning! Teachers and parents who have become homeschool teachers

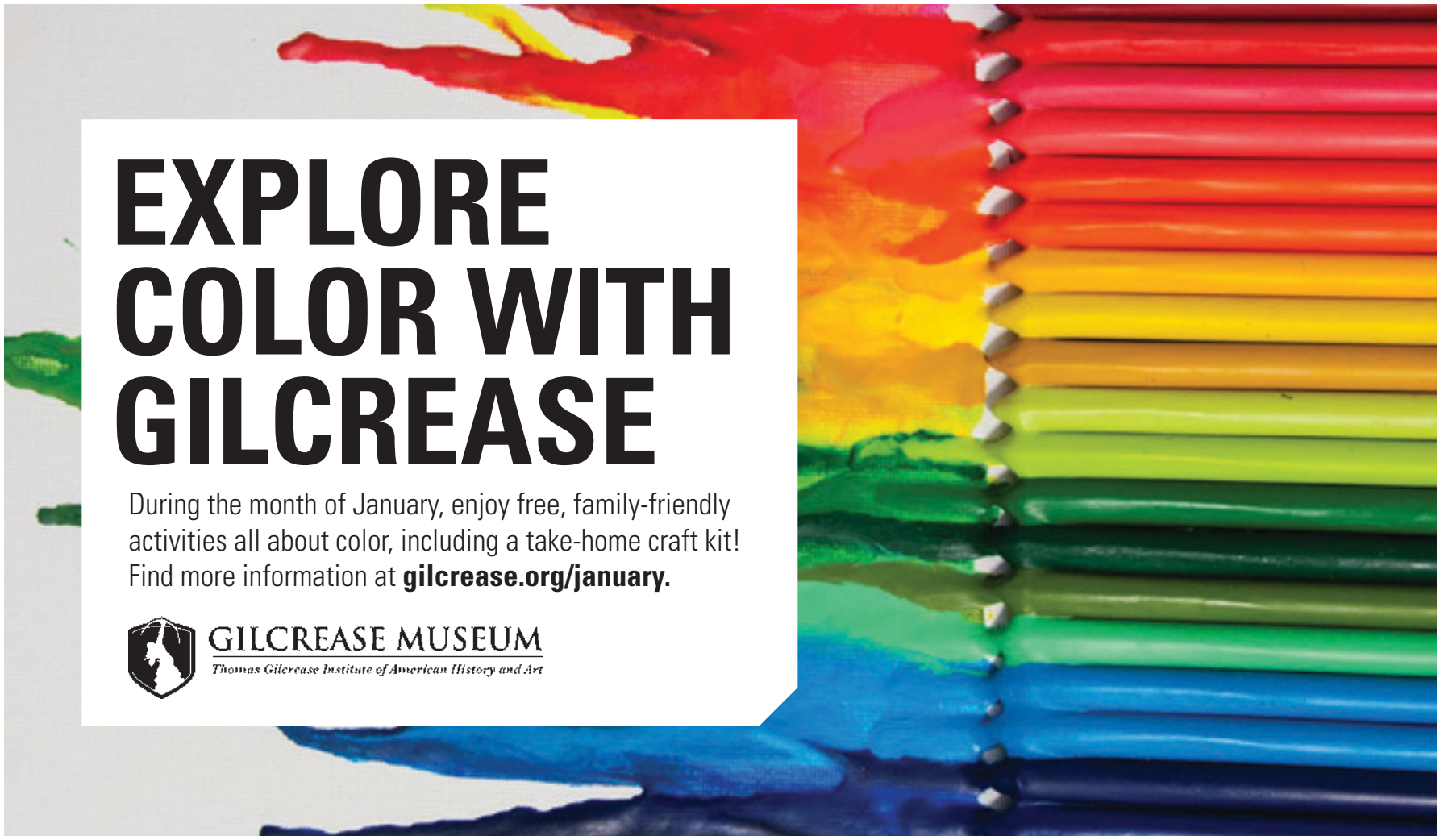
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may be interested in the many wonderful lesson plans related to Zachariah Hora's books at www.tulsalibrary.org/kids/books-to-treasure. You'll also find lesson plans for each of our past Books To Treasure honored illustrators going back to 2003!

BOOKS TO TREASURE 2020
Featuring Zachariah OHora
All second-graders in Tulsa County will receive a copy of *Horrible Bear!* (illustrated by Zachariah OHora, written by Ame Dyckman) and will have the opportunity to get their own special library card featuring artwork from Horrible Bear!
Public Presentation:
Friday, January 22
7 p.m.
Live on YouTube:
youtube.com/tulsalibrary
Find out more here: www.tulsalibrary.org/kids/books-to-treasure







ASK THE

Miller Swim School I Sarah Miller

Q. I really want my little one to be comfortable in the water this spring and summer, but I'm not sure what to do for babies his age?



A. Babies as early as 4 months old can willingly accept water acclimation, sometimes even more so than their preschool-aged counterparts! While babies as young as 4 months old can begin swim lessons, there ARE some activities you can do at home to help familiarize them with the water beforehand!

Start by introducing simple toys to your child in the bath. Show them how to use the toys, and sing songs as you play. This creates a positive association with the water from the get-go!

Next, help them prepare for submersions. Start slowly, by introducing a light trickle of water on their head. Then, gradually increase the amount of water until you can wet their entire head.

Finally, make a point to keep bath time fun. Be silly, make up games and keep your infant laughing. Remember, the earlier you can make your little one feel at ease in the water, the easier it'll be to get them swimming and enjoying water throughout their childhood.

6415 S. Mingo Rd., Tulsa • 525 W. 91st St. S., Jenks 918.254.1988
millerswimschool.com

On the Cusp Pediatric Dentistry & Orthodontics I Dr. Ryan Roberts, DDS

Q: When should I look into braces for my child?



A: Orthodontics is a major role in your child's mouth! Orthodontics deals with the diagnosis, prevention, and correction of wrongly positioned teeth and jaws as well as misaligned bite patterns. We have an orthodontist at our office and he, along with the American Academy of Orthodontics, say children should have an orthodontic assessment around the age seven! Now that doesn't mean your child will need braces at seven-years-old, but it is important to get an assessment to make sure all teeth are coming in correctly, to see if there is crowding, or if your child needs a tooth or two extracted to perfect their smile. Most pediatric dentists practice interceptive orthodontics, which means diagnosing and treating malocclusions (the abnormal alignment of the upper and lower teeth) as soon as they are detected! Usually a candidate for braces will be around the ages 11-13 years old, when a child has their permanent teeth! At my office we offer free orthodontic consultations if you ever have any questions, don't hesitate to call!

South: 8222 E. 103rd St.
Midtown: 4444 S. Harvard Ave.
918.921.8822 • OntheCuspdds.com

HTR Pediatric Therapy I Christina Saveth, M.S. CCC-SLP.

Q: My child has sensory issues. How do I get them to wear a mask all day at school?



A: This question is on a lot of parents' minds. The first thing I recommend is to buy the right size. Make sure it's for pediatric wearers. Second, it's important to include your child in the selection of their masks. Take into consideration current sensory needs. For example, don't buy a scratchy paper mask if you know your child has issues with clothing tags.

I strongly advocate using a visual social story. Many children have issues with transitions, so a visual story that you read with them lessens their anxiety and creates space to discuss their feelings or fears. Social stories should also present the expectations you and the school will have about keeping the mask on and asking for help if it causes discomfort. Find printable social stories at www.theOTtoolbox.com.

Discuss why, how and when they need to wear a mask. Talk about how the mask feels when they put it on and which mask feels the best. Lastly, let them wear the mask for small increments of time; set a timer if needed. At home, they can get used to wearing the mask, and you can find out what bothers them about it. If you have any questions, we are here for you at HTRPediatrics!

HTR Pediatric Therapy • 6715 E. 41st St., Tulsa • 918.806.0106 • htrpediatrics.com

Dyslexia Center of Tulsa I Dr. Penny Stack, Founder & Owner

Q: I've noticed that my son sometimes writes letters backwards even though he knows them. Could this be dyslexia?



A: Letter reversals are commonly thought of as a sign of dyslexia. However, not everyone who has dyslexia will have difficulties with reversing letters or numbers, and vice versa. Dyslexia is a language processing disorder. Letter reversals are typically due to spatial awareness (knowing how to put parts together to create an image) or ocular motor dysfunction (eye muscles working together to steady an object for visual interpretation). Both of these are separate from and not associated with the language processing centers of the brain. Left untreated, frequent letter or number reversals can make reading, writing, spelling, and math challenging and frustrating. An evaluation with an occupational therapist can help identify why he is writing letters backwards and with developing a treatment plan.

Dr. Penny Stack, OTD, OTR/L, CLT,
8988 S. Sheridan Rd #D1, Tulsa OK 74133
918.313.5518
www.dyslexiatulsa.com

World Travel Service I Alex Eaton, President

Q: What are the primary advantages of using a travel advisor over online travel "discounters" like Travelocity or Expedia, or simply planning a trip yourself?



A: Some of the more obvious reasons for using one of our experienced travel advisors are time and cost savings as well as greater access to special rates and upgrades. However, the overarching advantage is that travel advisors have a vested interest in you personally and work with you to customize your trip. The rigidity of booking through Travelocity, Expedia or figuring things out on your own too often results in minimal to no assistance with changes and does not offer much wiggle room for "mistakes." Once you hit "send," it's on you to navigate and figure things out in an ever more complicated booking environment. The prevailing good news is that travel advisors have deep relationships with suppliers, thus allowing for adjustments and providing peace of mind and security in this new age of travel.

918.743.8856 • World Travel Service,
7645 E. 63rd Street, Tulsa, OK 74133
www.WorldTravelToday.com

Premier Pediatrics of Bixby I Dr. Morgan, MD, FAAP

Q: Is it too late for my child to get the influenza vaccine?



A: Vaccination is recommended to be done by the end of October each influenza season. However, you are still able to get your child vaccinated! Most local clinics and health departments have influenza vaccines readily available as the influenza season is expected to last through April or May each year. Children are eligible to receive the influenza vaccine once they turn 6 months old. Children under the age of 9 years may need a booster immunization 4 weeks later depending on their vaccine history. Illnesses this year, with our current pandemic, are stressful for families. Make sure to do all you can to protect your children.

Premier Pediatrics of Bixby
7814 E. 121st St. Bixby
918.943.5777
premier-pediatrics.com

EXPERTS

Drops of Hope Consulting,LLC I April D. Tate

Q: How do I prepare for an IEP meeting?

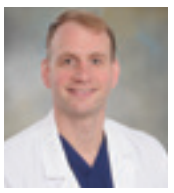


A: Start by sitting down and thinking about your parental concerns. Think in terms of grades, handwriting, attention, speech and behavior. Write these concerns down – it is easy to forget important points you want to cover! Next, search through your child's schoolwork to find samples to support your concerns. I suggest keeping all of your child's work throughout the year. An easy way to do this is to set up a box in a spare closet and every day after emptying their folder, drop the work in the box. Then write a list of questions that you want clarification on: acronyms or words on the evaluation, etc. It is so important to write down everything that you want a better understanding of, because IEP meetings tend to be highly emotional. Taking these few quick steps to prepare will help you leave feeling informed and heard.

Drops of Hope Consulting, LLC
April D. Tate
918.633.3521
dropsofhopeconsulting@gmail.com

Eastern Oklahoma Ear, Nose and Throat I Jeremy Foon, MD, MPH

Q: My daughter was recently recommended to have ear tubes placed? What are ear tubes and why would she need them?



A: Ear tubes are tiny grommet shaped tubes that are surgically placed in the eardrum. They relieve pressure in the ear and help to drain any persistent fluid that may be built up behind the eardrum. Common causes for these issues include recurrent ear infections, enlarged adenoids, or allergies. While ear tubes do not eliminate ear infections altogether, they tend to significantly decrease the frequency and severity of infections. They also help restore normal hearing that may be compromised from fluid behind the eardrum. Ear tube placement is one of the most common procedures performed on children as young as 6 months old. It is a very safe procedure that generally takes 10-15 minutes to perform with a typical 1-day recovery.

Jeremy Foon, MD, MPH
Eastern Oklahoma Ear, Nose and Throat
Two Tulsa Locations: 5020 E 68th St
and 9343 S Mingo Rd
918.492.3636
www.eoent.com

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*Academic Scholars have a 3.7 or higher uweighted GPA and a 27 ACT or 1220 SAT
Statistics based on 67 students in the Class of 2020

KEY DATES

CASCIA HALL PRIVATE CAMPUS TOURS
WEDNESDAYS // 8:00AM - 2:00PM

ENTRANCE EXAM (GRADES 6 - 9)
JANUARY 13 // 8:00AM

REGISTER TODAY AT
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TAKE AN EVENING HIKE AND ENJOY HOT COCOA AND S'MORES AT TULSA BOTANIC GARDEN'S FULL MOON HIKE ON JANUARY 28. TULSABOTANIC.ORG

[FREE, W] = FREE WEEKLY [W] = WEEKLY

• ALERT •
***Please note: This information is correct to the best of our knowledge. However, please always check with the event organizer ahead of time to confirm details, as information could change due to COVID-19 or other factors.**

January 1 Friday

GARDEN OF LIGHTS
Time is running out to attend Tulsa Botanic Garden's Garden of Lights! Pre-purchase tickets at tulsabotanic.org to enjoy colorful lights, fire pits and s'mores kits, drinks, a photo booth, hay maze and more! Tulsa Botanic Garden, 3900 Tulsa Botanic Dr., 5-9 p.m. Repeats January 2 and 3. tulsabotanic.org

January 2 Saturday

SATURDAY MORNING BIRDING [FREE]
Enjoy some Saturday morning birding at Oxley Nature Center! Bring binoculars if you have them; all ages and skill levels are welcome. Oxley Nature Center, 6700 Mohawk Blvd., 8-9:45 a.m. oxleynaturecenter.org

KIDS TAKE OVER THE COWBOY: WOMEN OF THE WEST
The wild, untamed West was a place where women could often reach beyond what societal norms established back east allowed. They could often own land, run businesses and even vote in many places before the 19th Amendment. Come celebrate the contributions of women in the West. Take your shot at the Annie Oakley Markswomanship Shootin' Gallery, try your hand at some rodeo events and enjoy storytime at 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Free for members or with Museum admission. Available while supplies last. National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum, 1700 Northeast 63rd St., Oklahoma City, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. nationalcowboymuseum.org

WINTER WONDERLAND [FREE]
Gathering Place's Winter Wonderland has returned this year, with a focus on social distancing!

Experience thousands of twinkling lights illuminating the QuikTrip Great Lawn and ONEOK Boathouse, creating uniquely themed realms designed to look and feel like you are in the North Pole! Learn more at gatheringplace.org.

Gathering Place, 2600 S. Riverside Dr., 6-9 p.m. (Repeats nightly through January 3)

January 3 Sunday

WINTER LIBRARY BINGO [FREE, ONGOING]
Stop by your favorite library location and pick up a Winter Bingo sheet! Complete five squares in a row to be eligible to win 1 of 3 cozy gift sets. Activities include reading books, attending virtual library events and more! Return completed Bingo sheets to your favorite library location, or email a picture of your completed sheet to cas@tulsalibrary.org. For adults ages 18 and up. January 2-31. tulsalibrary.org

January 4 Monday

STRESS BALLOONS: TO-GO CRAFT KIT FOR TEENS [FREE]
Use flour and a balloon to make a stress ball you can squeeze and stretch! Stop by the Brookside Library (1207 E. 45th Pl.) to pick up a kit while supplies last. For ages 10-18. tulsalibrary.org

January 5 Tuesday

NOS APOYAMOS! [FREE]
This support group is for Spanish-speaking parents of children with developmental disabilities. For more information, contact Hannah Chaboya at TARC, at 918-582-8272. 6-7:30 p.m. ddadvocacy.net

January 6 Wednesday

CAREGIVER/CHILD YOGA
With music and movement, you and your child are bound to have fun during this short yoga practice together. Learn breathing practices and poses you can do as a family at home. Discovery Lab, 560 N. Maybelle Ave., 10:30-11 a.m. discoverylab.org

STORY TIME AT TULSA ZOO [W]
Warm up inside Rajan's and join the Tulsa Zoo for Story Time. Each week, visitors will get to listen to a different book and have an up-close ambassador animal encounter. Tulsa Zoo, 6421 E. 36th St. N., 10 a.m. tulsazoo.org

January 7 Thursday

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: FAMILY [FREE, W]
Tune in for this real-time birth-5 storytime! Enjoy simple songs and books for little ones and more interactive stories and activities for older children. Join here: www.facebook.com/tulsalibrary. Can't make it live? The library will save all storytime videos on Facebook and Tulsa City-County Library's YouTube page for your children to enjoy later! Repeats January 14, 21 and 28. 10:30-11 a.m.

THE STUDIO: PANTONE COLORS OF THE YEAR [ONGOING]
All month long, THE STUDIO at ahha Tulsa will have materials that correspond with the Pantone colors of the year. This is your chance to get creative with color! Included with admission. ahha Tulsa, 101 E. Archer St. ahhatulsa.org

COLOR ALONG [FREE, W]
Each week the Zarrow Regional Library will give out a new coloring page to color together during this virtual Color Along. Join on Zoom to show off your progress and/or post photos of your finished or in-progress pictures on the library's weekly Color Along Facebook posts here: facebook.com/zarrowlibrary. Pick up the coloring page using curbside service at Zarrow Regional Library (2224 W. 51st St.). If you need colored pencils, please ask for them and the library will provide them, while supplies last. Or contact the library at ZR@tulsalibrary.org to ask us to email it to you. Register with your email address at www.tulsalibrary.org/events or email ZR@tulsalibrary.org for Zoom link (requests must be received before Thursday). During the last week of the month, people who have posted a picture of their finished or in-progress pictures will be entered into a drawing for a coloring prize! The winner will be announced on Facebook the day after the drawing and during the following Zoom Color Along. For ages 10 to adult. Repeats January 14, 21 and 28. 4-5 p.m.



CELEBRATE NATIONAL HOT CHOCOLATE DAY ON JANUARY 31. WANT TO MAKE YOUR OWN? FIND SOME UNIQUE VARIATIONS – LIKE EARL GREY HOT CHOCOLATE – AT TULSAKIDS.COM.

January 8 Friday

SECOND FRIDAY ART CRAWL
Because first Friday falls on New Year's Day, the Tulsa Arts District is holding a SECOND Friday Art Crawl! District venues will be open late with COVID protocols in place. Tulsa Arts District, 6-9 p.m. facebook.com/tulsaartsdistrict

January 9 Saturday

STORYTIME AT LAVENDER'S BLEU LITERACY MARKET [FREE, W]
Enjoy a socially distanced storytime each Saturday morning at Lavender's Bleu! Hand sanitizer will be provided, and please wear a mask! Lavender's Bleu Literacy Market, 8210 S. Harvard Ave., 11 a.m. lbliteracymarket.com

FAMILY SWIM AT MILLER SWIM SCHOOL JENKS [W]
Reserve your spot at Miller Swim School's Family Swim time! $2 per person if currently enrolled in swim lessons; $5 per person if not currently enrolled. Miller Swim School Jenks, 525 W. 91st St. S., 4-6 p.m. millerswimschool.com/programs/open-swim

January 10 Sunday

FAMILY SWIM AT MILLER SWIM SCHOOL [W]
Reserve your spot at Miller Swim School's Family Swim time! $2 per person if currently enrolled in swim lessons; $5 per person if not currently enrolled. Miller Swim School, 6415 S. Mingo Rd., 4-6 p.m. millerswimschool.com/programs/open-swim

January 11 Monday

VISIT HELMERICH PLAYGROUND: BEHAVING LIKE ANIMALS [ONGOING]
At Tulsa Zoo's new playground, kids can swing like monkeys, climb like leopards and even hang from webs like a spider! The Behaving Like Animals playground will amaze kids and adults – and there is plenty of seating, hand sanitizer, etc. available. Pre-purchase your zoo tickets at tulsazoo.org, as admission is limited each day. Tulsa Zoo, 6421 E. 36th St. N.

FINDING LATINX: A VIRTUAL CONVERSATION WITH AUTHOR PAOLA RAMOS [FREE]
Join TCCL for a virtual reading and discussion with Paola Ramos, author of "Finding Latinx: In Search of the Voices Redefining Latino Identity." Join the His-



JOIN TULSAKIDS FOR OUR FIRST VIRTUAL SCHOOL FAIR ON JANUARY 13! DETAILS AVAILABLE AT FACEBOOK.COM/TULSAKIDS MAGAZINE

panic Resource Center on Tulsa City-County Library's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/tulsalibrary, for this livestream reading and discussion. A vital and inspiring work of reportage, "Finding Latinx" calls on all of us to expand our understanding of what it means to be Latino and what it means to be American. The first step toward change, writes Ramos, is for us to recognize who we are. For all ages.

January 12 Tuesday

EXHIBITION: PROJECT HOPE, UNITY AND COMPASSION
Leading up to the Trump rally this past June, local artists mobilized to create works of art on boards covering downtown storefronts. From January 8-22, these works will be on display at Living Arts of Tulsa, 307 E. Reconciliation Way. Learn more at livingarts.org.

January 13 Wednesday

DANCE & SING ALONG
Join Executive Director Ray Vandiver and the Discovery Lab band as they sing classic children's songs. Dance with scarves, play along with instruments, and be ready to get your groove on! Discovery Lab, 560 N. Maybelle Ave., 10:30-11 a.m. discoverylab.org

TULSAKIDS VIRTUAL SCHOOL FAIR [FREE]
TulsaKids Magazine is hosting our first ever Virtual School Fair! Learn about local school options for pre-K through high schoolers. This event will take place on Facebook – RSVP to our event page at facebook.com/tulsakidsmagazine for details!

CLAY DAY AT AHHA TULSA
On one day a month, ahha Tulsa brings out the clay! Visitors can enjoy building and creating with clay in THE STUDIO. It's all included with admission! ahha Tulsa, 101 E. Archer St. 12-9 p.m. ahhatulsa.org

January 14 Thursday

KIDS CONNECTION [FREE]
This is a social group designed for children, grades K - 5, with high-functioning autism For more information, contact Sherilyn Walton or Steve Pitts at 918-582-8272. 4:30-5:30 p.m. ddadvocacy.net

January 15 Friday

CELEBRATE: NATIONAL HAT DAY
Dress up in your favorite hat – and do some research on the history of head-wear! Fedoras, beanies, berets – what's your favorite type of hat, and where did it come from?

FANDOM FRIDAY TRIVIA: '90S TV [FREE]
Looking for a fun night of trivia about your favorite '90s TV shows? You got it, dude! Join TCCL as librarians test your knowledge on everything from the "Fresh Prince" to "The X-Files." Register online at www.tulsalibrary.org/events to receive a Zoom meeting invite. Questions? Contact Rebecca.Harrison@tulsalibrary.org. For adults. 6:30-8 p.m.

January 16 Saturday

TULSA FARMERS' MARKET [FREE]
Shop at the Tulsa Farmers' Market all year long! The Winter Market is held every other Saturday at Kendall-Whittier Square, 1 S. Lewis Ave., from 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. tulsafarmersmarket.org

January 17 Sunday

Find more events at tulsakids.com/calendar.

January 18 Monday

TULSA MLK PARADE [FREE]
The theme of this year's MLK Parade is Standing Strong: For Justice, Truth, and Freedom. Attendees are invited to remember Dr. King's legacy and think about how they can be a part of keeping his dream alive. Detroit Ave. and John Hope Franklin Blvd. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. mlktulsa.com

January 19 Tuesday

VISIT GILCREASE GARDENS [ONGOING]
The Gilcrease Gardens and neighboring Stuart Park are open daily from 6 a.m.-11 p.m. Admission is free, and you can get printable scavenger hunts ahead of time at gilcrease.org/gardens. 1400 N. Gilcrease Museum Rd.

TAKE-HOME CRAFT: NATIONAL HOBBY MONTH [FREE]
Stop by Central Library (400 Civic Center) and pick up a take-home sewing kit in celebration of National Hobby Month! Supplies are limited. Watch a preview for this take-home sewing kit on the Central Library Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/centrallibrary/. For ages 5-12. Repeats January 19-30.

TEEN BOOK CHAT [FREE]
Join on Zoom to chat about the Sequoyah Book Award nominee "With the Fire on High" by Elizabeth Acevedo and swap favorite recipes! Register online at www.tulsalibrary.org/events with your email address to receive the Zoom link. Visit https://tccl.bibliocommons.com/item/show/4388073063 to find a print or electronic copy today! Synopsis: Deciding what to do after high school is difficult, but Emoni Santiago knows what her passion is: cooking. When a new elective opens up, Emoni has to take Culinary Arts. However, Emoni has a daughter, Emma, and she relies on her Abuela for so much. Can Emoni find the balance between school, family and her future, or what will she have to sacrifice? 6-7 p.m.

January 20 Wednesday

SCIENCE DEMO
Join Discovery Lab for an exciting science demonstration! This event is included with museum admission. Discovery Lab, 560 N. Maybelle Ave., 10:30-11 a.m. discoverylab.org

DISMANTLING RACISM: THINKING ABOUT MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
This month's Dismantling Racism

discussion will look at the life and work of Martin Luther King, Jr., beyond the famous "I Have a Dream" speech. Join TulsaKids Editor Betty Casey and OSU-Tulsa professor Quraysh Ali Lansana on Facebook live at noon. And as always, feel free to participate by asking questions and comments throughout the discussion. facebook.com/tulsakidsmagazine

January 21 Thursday

THE EXPERIENCE: IMAGINE AT AHHA TULSA [ONGOING]
Have you made it to THE EXPERIENCE: IMAGINE? This fantastical world is made up of art like nothing else. Six Tulsa-based artists have built an entire floor for you to explore at ahha Tulsa. Learn more and plan a safe visit for the whole family at www.ahhatulsa.org/the-experience-imagine. Ahha Tulsa, 101 E. Archer St.

January 22 Friday

OUT-LIT: YA BOOK CLUB [FREE]
Talk about issues No. 1 of the graphic novels "Backstagers" by Tynion IV and Sygh; "Lumberjanes" by Watters, Ellis, Stevenson and Allen; and "She-Ra and the Princesses of Power" by Gigi D.G. Get e-books on Hoopla. Register online at www.tulsalibrary.org/events to be emailed the Zoom link. For ages 12-18. 4:30-5:30 p.m.

BOOKS TO TREASURE [FREE]
Join children's book illustrator Zachariah OHora LIVE on YouTube for a freewheeling talk that will include an art demonstration and examples of artwork from when he was a kid! Join OHora here: www.YouTube.com/TulsaLibrary. Sponsored by the Tulsa Library Trust through a grant from the Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation. Visit https://www.tulsalibrary.org/kids/books-to-treasure for more information. For all ages. 7-8 p.m.

January 23 Saturday

BEHIND THE SEAS
Camp isn't just for kids at the Oklahoma Aquarium! Spend a day Behind the Seas to learn about how the Aquarium staff cares for its animals. Participants will feed animals on and off exhibit and learn about our research and conservation efforts. Ages 21+. Camp capacity is limited to 10 participants. Oklahoma Aquarium, 300 Aquarium Dr., Jenks, 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. okaquarium.org

WINTER WONDERLAND FAIRY CAMP
Registration Closes January 9. Experience winter wonder in this short weekend session of magical fairy fun! Children will create a fairy wand, fairy wings, and a fairy headband inspired by the sparkle, snow, and ice of the season. This camp will be taught virtually over Zoom. Supply delivery is an additional $15, or supplies can be picked up at ahha at no additional cost. Camp for kids ages 5-8 meets 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. and is $45. Camp for kids ages 9-11 meets from 1-3 p.m. and is $75. Learn more at ahhatulsa.org/classes/winter-wonderland-fairy-fun.

EXPLORE THE FLORA [FREE]
Explore the flora at Oxley Nature Center, 6700 Mohawk Blvd. 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. oxleynaturecenter.org

January 24 Sunday

EXHIBITION: WEAVING HISTORY INTO ART: THE ENDURING LEGACY OF SHAN GOSHORN [ONGOING]
Weaving History into Art: The Enduring Legacy of Shan Goshorn features the art of Shan Goshorn (Eastern Band Cherokee, 1957-2018) and her legacy of influence carried forward through the works of four contemporary Native American women artists. Learn more at gilcrease.org/exhibitions. This exhibition will be on display through March 28. Advance tickets required. Reserve yours at gilcrease.org. Gilcrease Museum, 1400 N. Gilcrease Museum Rd.

January 25 Monday

Find more events at tulsakids.com/calendar

January 26 Tuesday

Find more events at tulsakids.com/calendar

January 27 Wednesday

BIKES, BALLS & YOU (AGES 1-5) [FREE, W]
This open gym time for preschoolers is a great way to socialize with other kids. Families must bring their own riding toy. Please no food or drinks in the gym. Whiteside Community Center, 5009 S. Pittsburg Ave., 9-10 a.m. cityoftulsa.org

MOVE IT!
Move to music, play a game, and read a book! All activities center around a theme and are designed for young children's physical, mental, emotional, and social development. Discovery Lab, 560 N. Maybelle Ave., 10:30-11 a.m. discoverylab.org

TEEN CONNECTION [FREE]
This is a social group for middle and high school students with high functioning autism. For more information, contact Sherilyn Walton or Steve Pitts at 918-582-8272. 4:30-6 p.m. ddadvocacy.net

CELEBRATE: LIBRARY SHELFIE DAY
Take this opportunity to do a little re-organization! Are your bookshelves looking a little…meh? Try sorting your books by color or thickness, or arrange the titles so they form a secret message! Don't forget to post a #libraryshelfieday photo when you're done!

January 28 Thursday

FULL MOON HIKE
Take a self-guided night hike to experience the sights and sounds along a nature trail through native prairie and forest. Wear comfortable walking shoes and bring a flashlight for this 1.5 mile hike on mowed path and rocky trail Not recommended for children under age 6.

Hot cider, s'mores kits, and beer and wine will be available for purchase before or after your walk and fire pits will be located nearby. Ticket is $10 per person for Garden members; $15 for non-members. Spaces are limited and advance tickets are required. Purchase online at tulsabotanic.org. Tulsa Botanic Garden, 3900 Tulsa Botanic Dr., 5:30-7:30 p.m. tulsabotanic.org

January 29 Friday

CELEBRATE: NATIONAL PUZZLE DAY
You can observe National Puzzle Day by doing any kind of puzzle, from crosswords to sudoku to the classic jigsaw puzzle. Have a family puzzle competition - or work together!

January 30 Saturday

Find more events at tulsakids.com/calendar

January 31 Sunday

CELEBRATE: NATIONAL HOT CHOCOLATE DAY
Warm up with a cozy beverage! If you want to make your own hot chocolate from scratch, check out these recipes from our website: tulsakids.com/hot-chocolate-inspiration-four-unique-recipes.

BY NANCY A. MOORE

meet teressa lee – **happy hands and happy heart**

When Teressa Lee left her job of almost 30 years, she was open to the possibilities and dared to dream of the opportunities that lay ahead. As a seasoned professional in her field, she worried that her talents might be overlooked, but that was certainly not the case! She considers herself fortunate to have found a position she loves and wants to share the message that you can land your dream job at any age!

TK: Tell us about yourself.

Lee: I was born in Okmulgee and grew up in Liberty Mounds (Hectorville), Oklahoma. I met my husband while attending college in Edmond, and we have two children and two grandboys. My master's degree is in Special Education and I am currently teaching at Happy Hands which is a Christian early education center. Our primary focus at Happy Hands Education Center is for all to know Jesus and our mission is "to empower children who are deaf and hard of hearing or have other communicative disorders to flourish."

TK: What is your favorite inspirational quote?

Lee: I love this quote by Helen Keller because it reminds me to have deep and meaningful connections: "The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart." Also, Matthew 5:16 is one of my favorite verses: "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good work and glorify your Father in heaven."



TERESSA LEE LOVES WORKING WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING.
PHOTO CREDIT: SHEEBA ATIQI

TK: What sparked your interest in pursuing a career in education?

Lee: When I was young, I would go with my Aunt Malinda to events where she worked with special needs adults. I remember wanting to go with her more than allowed because I enjoyed and desired to help the residents. In middle school, I had a wonderful teacher named Mrs. Joanne Cox. She made a difference in my life because she made learning interesting and she really cared about us, which was very inspirational to me. I believe it was God's calling to be a special education teacher, and I have a sincere commitment to ensure that children are equipped with the foundation of learning.

TK: Why do you think you have found your dream job?

Lee: God had blessed me with the opportunity to teach unique and special children in public school for almost 30 years. With God's timing and a leap of faith, I was again blessed with the opportunity to continue working with unique children, although in a private Christian school. My passion for sign language, following God's plan for my life, and the desire to see all kids learn is at Happy Hands Education Center!

TK: What advice would you give to others on pursuing their dream job?

Lee: Follow your passion and find your purpose in life. Pray and pay attention to the 'God winks' that may occur in your life!

TK: Tell us about your job at Happy Hands.

Lee: Being an assistant teacher is perfect for me as I consider myself a 'night light' and not the 'chandelier'. My classroom co-workers and I are a wonderful team and we each have our own God-given talents and skills that mesh together well so we

continued next page

can provide for and meet the individual needs of our children.

TK: How has Happy Hands accommodated during the pandemic?

Lee: The pandemic has affected our ability to meet new people and potential new donors. We are now offering virtual 'See The Story' tours instead of people actually coming inside the building. Visitors and volunteers are temporarily restricted. We wear masks as we enter and exit the building and in the halls. We received a donation of clear masks to wear as needed to accommodate lip readers. We remain in our own classrooms (like family) and have discontinued gathering as groups or visiting other classrooms. We very much miss seeing and hugging our parents as staff now walk the children to and from the building instead of parents coming into our classrooms. We all wash our hands a zillion more times throughout the day! Our administration has developed a Pandemic Policy to help keep us safe and healthy.

TK: What makes your classroom/curriculum unique?

Lee: Our classroom is a unique setting where children enjoy play-based learning and 'loose parts' which helps them inspire imagination and creativity on their own terms and in their own special way. We encourage and offer natural, sensory, and recycled materials for open-ended learning. Our teacher-child ratio remains small, giving us more availability to assist each child with their different needs and individual goals. We play outside as much as possible and are so blessed to have our own area right outside our classroom door to play and explore! Our children use a variety of aids and ways to assist them with receptive and expressive language, so in our classroom we accommodate their needs to enhance communication and learning. Verbal skills and sign language are encouraged!

TK: Being a non-profit program, how can individuals help Happy Hands?

Lee: Being a non-profit, we depend on donations. We have an ongoing Wish List if anyone would like to donate. Our current needs are: Size 5 diapers, powder-free vinyl gloves, paper towels, copy paper and postage stamps.

TK: What else would you like to mention?

Lee: I am incredibly blessed and thankful for all the children I have known through the years. They have taught me many things about life!

To learn more about Happy Hands Education Center, visit www.happyhands.org or call 918.893.4800. Happy Hands will be having their next VIRTUAL "See The Story" tour on January 21. Please contact Nathan Tifft if interested: nathan@happyhands.org or 918.893.4812.

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RIVERFIELD COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL



BY NATALIE MIKLES

nothing says “comfort” quite like warm pasta dishes

Comfort food is one of the cures for getting through a long winter.

Particularly this year, we need foods that will warm and nourish our bodies and give us a lift. Eating them in a cozy room with a fireplace or lit candles helps too.

Children experience the same crash adults do after the holidays, and can be buoyed by the same things that give adults joy. A simple needlepoint project, painting on canvas, learning to play guitar, baking bread – inviting our children to join us in our winter projects is a good way to sustain us as we continue to social distance and dream of warmer days spent with friends and family. Good food helps, too!

Big bowls of comfort food – think soups, stews and chili – are perfect for cold, dark nights. Another nearly universal favorite for kids and adults is pasta.

Most children are agreeable to a bowl of spaghetti and meatballs, macaroni and cheese or creamy, cheesy baked rigatoni. So we’ve gathered some of our favorite recipes for winter pasta dishes. These are the kinds of recipes that will have your kids asking for seconds – a thrill for parents of picky eaters. They also make great leftovers, so make extra for dinner the next day, or to put into a thermos for the kids’ lunch.



This meatless pasta bake is delicious and easy to make. You can substitute ziti, penne or any favorite pasta.

CREAMY AND CHEESY BAKED RIGATONI

Serves 8

- 1 pound uncooked rigatoni
- 1 (32-ounce) jar marinara sauce
- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 16 ounces shredded mozzarella
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil

1. Heat oven to 375 degrees. Spray a 9-by-11-inch casserole dish with nonstick cooking spray.

2. In a large pot, cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain and set aside.

3. In a large saucepan over medium heat, cook the marinara sauce and cream cheese together until the cheese melts. Stir often. Add the pasta to the sauce and mix well.

4. Pour half the sauce in the prepared baking dish, and sprinkle with half the mozzarella and half the Parmesan cheese. Top with 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil. Add the remaining pasta and sauce, then top with the remaining mozzarella and Parmesan.

5. Cover and bake at 375 degrees for 30 minutes. Remove the cover and bake an additional 15-20 minutes or until the baked rigatoni is bubbly and cheese is golden. Garnish with the remaining chopped basil.

EASY SPAGHETTI CARBONARA

Serves 6

- 1 pound spaghetti
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 pound bacon
- 1 cup diced onion
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 5 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 cup shredded Pecorino Romano or Parmesan cheese, divided
- Salt and black pepper to taste

1. Cook the spaghetti until al dente. Reserve some pasta water. Drain pasta, place in a bowl and toss with a little olive oil.

2. In a large skillet, cook bacon until crispy. Remove and drain onto paper towels. Tear or cut into small pieces.

3. Using 2 tablespoons of reserved bacon fat, cook the onion until just translucent. Add the garlic, and cook 1 minute more. Return bacon to pan and combine.

4. Combine the bacon mixture with the drained pasta and toss, adding more olive oil or pasta water if it seems dry. Add the beaten eggs, and toss with tongs until eggs coat all of the

continued next page

pasta. Add 1/2 cup cheese, and toss again. Add salt and pepper to taste, and serve with extra cheese.

You might be surprised how much your kids will like this pasta. If you're not a fan of smoked salmon, you could substitute cooked shrimp, or just leave out the seafood. This recipe comes from food writer J.M. Hirsch.

LINGUINE WITH GOAT CHEESE, SMOKED SALMON AND PEAS

Serves 4

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium red onion, thinly sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 12 ounces linguine
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 4-ounce package smoked salmon, cut into thin strips
- 4-ounce log goat cheese, cut into 6 chunks
- ½ tablespoon chopped fresh dill
- Grated zest of 1 lemon
- Salt and ground black pepper, to taste

1. Bring a large saucepan of salted water to a boil.

2. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, combine the olive oil, onion, garlic and red pepper flakes. Sauté until the onion is tender, about 5 minutes.

3. Cook the pasta according to package directions.

4. Meanwhile, add the peas to the onion and sauté until the peas are heated through. Remove the skillet from the heat.

5. Once the pasta is done, reserve ½ cup of the cooking water, then drain the pasta. Add the pasta to the onions and peas, then toss.

6. Add the smoked salmon, goat cheese, dill, lemon zest and ¼ cup of the reserved pasta cooking water. Toss until the cheese is melted. If the sauce is too thick, add more of the pasta cooking water. Season with salt and pepper and serve.

We love this fun idea for a pasta side dish from Food and Wine. It's enough to fill 10 regular-size muffins or 24 mini muffins. This makes a great little meal for toddlers.

MUFFIN CUP MAC AND CHEESE

- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, plus more for greasing
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 cups whole milk
- 8 ounces sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 8 ounces ditalini
- 1/3 cup fresh breadcrumbs

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease either a mini muffin pan with 24 cups, or a regular-size muffin pan.

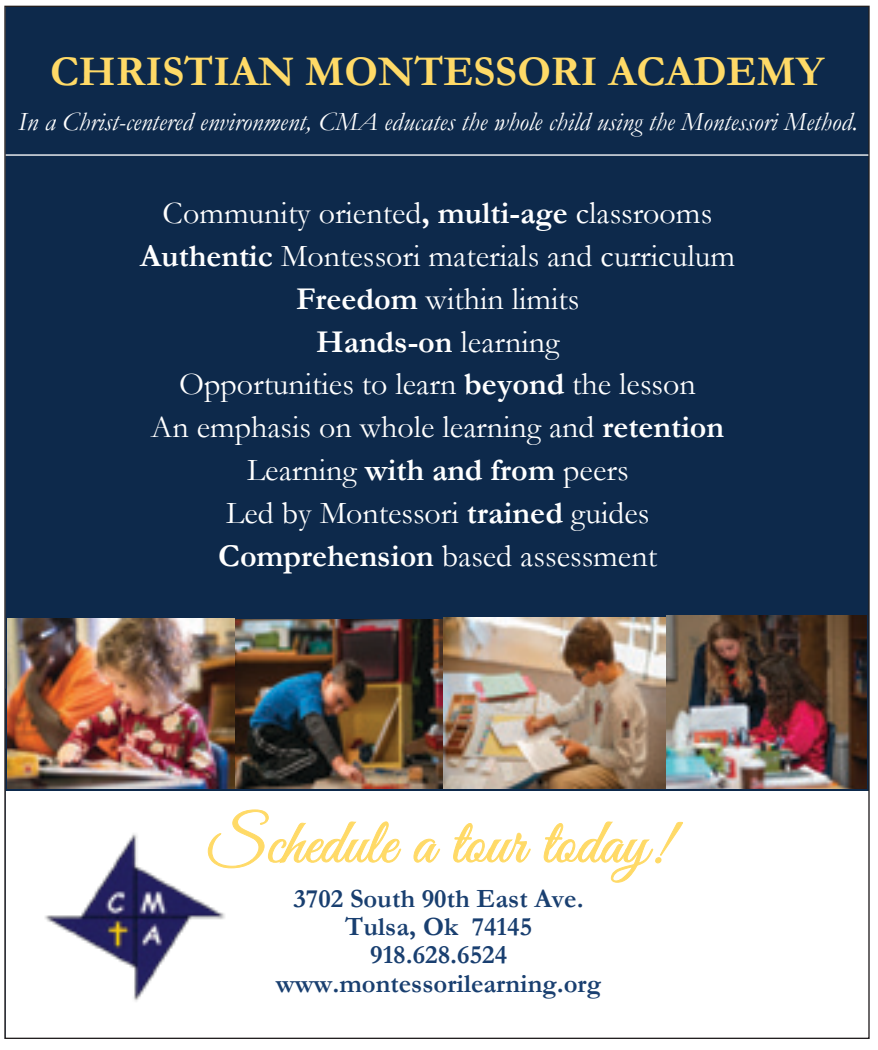
2. Heat 2 tablespoons of the butter in a saucepan over moderate heat. Add the flour and cook, stirring until smooth, for 1 minute. Drain. Add the milk and cook over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 10 minutes. Add the cheese and stir until it's melted and the sauce is completely smooth. Keep the sauce warm over very low heat.

3. In a medium pot of boiling well-salted water, cook the pasta until al dente. Add the pasta to the cheese sauce and stir to coat completely. Divide the macaroni and cheese evenly among the muffin cups.

4. In a small skillet over moderate heat, melt the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter. Stir in the breadcrumbs and cook, stirring, until they are golden and toasted, 3 to 5 minutes. Sprinkle the toasted breadcrumbs over the tops of the macaroni and cheese muffins.

5. Bake until golden and bubbling, about 15 minutes. Let the macaroni cool in the cups for 5 to 10 minutes before removing them and serving.

Make Ahead: Mac and cheese muffins can be baked, cooled and then wrapped individually in aluminum foil and frozen. Reheat in the oven or microwave.





SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

Parents, teachers and students love their schools! They shared some of their reasons with us on these two pages.

"Meet Georgia …this fourth grader is a real go-getter."

She loves to read, so she started a student-led book club. More than 20 of her classmates wanted in on the fun and now they meet outside at lunch and discuss the most recent book they picked together.

She loves to write, so she and some of her classmates started turning out newsletters about class happenings. They feature things like a review of the school Christmas play (calling it "pure magic"), an article questioning "Where are all the playground balls going?", and of course they recognize the four-square "players of the week." There are even interviews with new students asking, "What do you like about Metro?" with answers ranging from small class sizes to great teachers.

"I was thrilled when these kids decided to take it upon themselves to create these clubs, and coming from a public school, I expected to jump through a lot of hoops for it to happen," said Leslie, Georgia's mom. "However, it was really easy, and the teachers were so encouraging and willing to help. I am always amazed at the encouragement the students get when they have an idea."

Working together to help students achieve their goals, it's what Metro Christian Academy is all about.



Metro Christian Academy
6363 S. Trenton Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74136
918.745.9868
Metroca.com



"What I love about University School is that it challenges my daughter academically but also nurtures her creative spirit and inherent curiosity about the world. In addition, you can't beat the cultural diversity of the student body; I know my daughter is learning a lot about the world from her teachers but also from her classmates who have roots in Africa, India, and China. University School really is the whole package."

–Kristen Oertel

THE UNIVERSITY OF TULSA
University School

Debra Price, Director | Debra-price@utulsa.edu
326 S. College Ave. | Tulsa, OK | 918.631.5060
www.utulsa.edu/uschool

"Why I chose this school for my child."

"We were really needing, for both of our kids, a very creative, independent environment. I looked for about a year and a half. When Montessori came on our radar, I knew we had to be a part of it."

–Jami Hill,
parent of a middle school and elementary student



Montessori Academy of Owasso
Preparing Our Children to Change the World

Montessori Academy of Owasso
708 N. Atlanta St.
Owasso, OK 74055
www.owassomontessori.com

Contact Information
Elizabeth Overton, Executive Director
Director@OwassoMontessori.com
918-217-8033

"Why we chose Monte Cassino"

"We chose Monte Cassino because the teachers and staff go above and beyond to ensure our children are challenged, encouraged and equipped with not only a high quality education, but faith, a sense of community, critical leadership skills, and a servant mindset."
–The Hulver Family

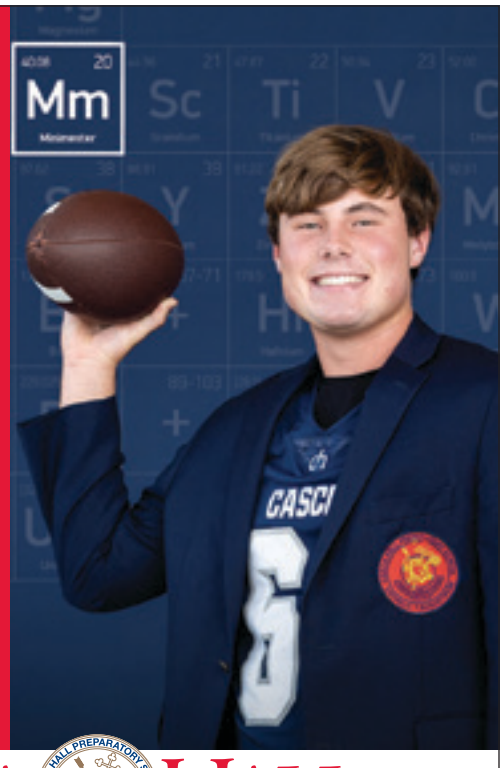


MONTE CASSINO
A Benedictine School

2206 S. Lewis Ave. | Tulsa, OK 74114 | 918.746.4238
www.montecassino.org | Contact: Brooke Jones

JJ Commandos Center & Aspiring Chemist

Cascia Hall Minimester inspires students like JJ to experiment with new ideas and to become oustanding in whatever fields they desire.



CASCIA HALL

CASCIA HALL PREPARATORY SCHOOL
2520 S. Yorktown Ave. | Tulsa, OK
918.746.2604 | www.casciahall.com

"Holland Hall has such a loving and friendly environment. I came from a small school that I attended for 11 years. I was mostly attracted to Holland Hall because it was small, academically inclined and prepares you well for college. My favorite part is learning new sports and continuing to meet new people. Overall, I love being a part of the Holland Hall family and I know others do, too, because this school has so much to offer."
— Hosanna, new Holland Hall 9th-grader.



HOLLAND HALL | 5666 E. 81st St.
Tulsa, OK | 918.481.1111
www.hollandhall.org

Holland Hall

In 2016 and 2018, God grew our family through the gift of international adoption. As a multicultural family, we realized the importance and need to surround our children with diversity, both in race and culture. God opened our eyes to VCS and the moment we toured the school and walked through the hallways, we knew this was the place for our family. The culture of the school mirrors the culture of our own home. Knowing that our children are being taught a solid education all while being encouraged to develop the gifts and anointing God has uniquely placed inside of them is priceless. We are proud to be Conquerors!
–Rocky & Samantha Ausbrooks



VICTORY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
7700 S. Lewis Ave. | Tulsa, OK 74136
918.491.7720
www.vcstulsa.org | @vcstulsa
Contact: Jan Thomas, Admission Specialist
jthomas@victory.com | 918.491.7763

VICTORY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

PRIVATE | CHRISTIAN | AFFORDABLE

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K3 - 12TH GRADE IN CLASS LEARNING

CALL 918.491.7720 | VCSTULSA.ORG

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

2021 EDUCATION & ENRICHMENT GUIDE

www.tulsakids.com

VICTORY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Contact: Jan Thomas, Admissions Specialist
7700 S. Lewis Ave.
Tulsa, OK
918.491.7720
vcstulsa.org

Victory Christian School is a K3-12th grade, fully accredited school with a Biblical worldview. Over the last ten years, our senior classes averaged $4.3 million in scholarship offers, produced 8 National Merit Scholars, and had an average score of 25 on their ACT. We had numerous district, regional and state championships while signing 43 student-athletes to collegiate scholarships. We have played for state championships in football, basketball, baseball, track and golf while winning four state championships in a row in Volleyball. Our 5th – 12th grade robotics program competes in state and regional competitions often resulting in invitations to compete at the national level. Our band consistently obtains 1's in state competitions, and we are the only private school in Oklahoma to have won Sweepstakes. We were blessed to add a brand new STEM lab in 2020 and have expanded our Kindergarten Wing to house our growing Elementary. We were founded to challenge students to become men and women fulfilling God's destiny for their life. Through challenging academics, a celebration of the arts and championship-level athletics, Victory Christian School is where your student can thrive! Student-led chapels, biblical studies, and missions trips train your children and present opportunities to develop their faith. VCS is more than an education. It's a preparation for a calling. Learn more at vcstulsa.org.

ahha TULSA

Hardesty Arts Center
101 E. Archer St.
Tulsa, OK
www.ahhatulsa.org

Ahha Tulsa is the arts destination for families and teens to explore, experience, and create! Check out THE STUDIO for drop-in activities that let guests think like artists through open-ended creative exploration and discovery. Select your own materials from a wide array of possibilities and make your own unique project. Ahha is also home to THE EXPERIENCE: IMAGINE, a large-scale immersive installation unlike anything else in Tulsa. Activities are included with the price of admission: $12.75 for adults, $8.75 for youth (3-17), and free for kids under 3 and ahha members. Be sure to follow @ ahhatulsa on social media for information about community art classes, teen programs, and camps for school-aged children. Explore your creativity today! www.ahhatulsa.org

AUGUSTINE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

John Ahrens, Headmaster
6310 E. 30th St.
Tulsa, OK
918.832.4600
www.acatulsa.org

Augustine Christian Academy is a Christian, classical, non-denominational, college preparatory school for grades Pre-K–12. We are dedicated to educating young people to think, reason, and persuade from a distinctly Christian worldview. Our goal is to equip students to understand their times, to impact their culture and to serve God and man. Augustine Christian Academy uses a classical model that integrates every subject with the Biblical truths of the Christian faith. Find us on Facebook and on our website at www.acatulsa.org!

BOSTON AVENUE WEEKDAY SCHOOL

1301 S. Boston Avenue
Tulsa, OK
918.699.0112
preschool@bostonavenue.org
www.bostonavenue.org

For 50 years, the Boston Avenue Weekday School has nurtured children spiritually, emotionally, socially, creatively, cognitively and physically while offering a warm, accepting early learning environment. Our weekly theme-based curriculum, which includes early faith lessons, supports teachers in their center-arranged classrooms, with a small teacher to student ratio. Activities include community visitors, field trips, chapel, music, yoga, sign language, and ASL and Spanish vocabulary. We also have a summer program for school-age children through 3rd grade. Call for information and a tour today! Although we enroll all year, enrollment for the next school year begins in March. Be sure to call early, as spots are limited. Serving ages 4 months through Pre-K. Oklahoma DHS Licensed. *Adapted drop off and pick up, sanitization and disinfection, and classroom procedures to meet and exceed current community health and safety guidelines*

BRAIN BALANCE OF TULSA

6022 S. Yale Ave.
KingsPointe Village
Tulsa, OK
918.488.8991
www.brainbalancecenters.com

The Brain Balance Program is the leading drug-free program designed to help kids improve focus, behavior, social skills, anxiety, and academic performance. The Brain Balance Program offers a comprehensive, non-medicated option that goes beyond the more traditional, mainstream approaches you may have tried before to help your child get to the root of their challenges versus masking them. The Brain Balance program is specifically designed to strengthen and build brain connectivity with a unique combination of physical, sensory, and cognitive activities. When you work these brain functions together, different networks in the brain fire together. Over time, this changes the speed and efficiency in the brain's communication pathways. These new, efficient and effective connections in the brain lead to improvements in our executive functioning and our ability to complete cognitive tasks. If your child suffers with behavioral issues, ADHD or a learning disability, then you've experienced their painful frustration and lack of confidence both academically and socially. Brain Balance can help! Call today to schedule an assessment.

CASCIA HALL PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Contact: Makala Welsh
2520 S. Yorktown Ave.
Tulsa, OK
918.746.2600
www.casciahall.com

Preparation for college begins in grade 6 with a seamless Catholic liberal arts curriculum through grade 12. Each class is aligned year after year to create pathways for students to reach their goals in college and in life. Students in grades 6-8 have opportunities to earn high school credit in math, science, and world language. Students in grades 9-12 can earn college credit in the extensive Advanced Placement program. College-level courses are available to upperclassmen through concurrent enrollment. Cascia Hall Upper School hosts a unique program called "Minimester" for students to explore student interests and ambitions. With an enrollment of approximately 550, students are related to as individuals, resulting in stronger motivation and achievement. One hundred percent of Cascia Hall seniors matriculate to college following graduation.

CHANNING DAY SCHOOL

Contact: Carol Ainsworth
2952 S. Peoria Ave.
Tulsa, OK
918.742.6731
www.channingdayschool.com

Channing Day School, Where love for learning begins. It's a fact: children who are given positive support right from the start are far more successful than those who are not. For more than 50 years, our time-proven methods, programs and activities have given children the tools to enter kindergarten ahead of the curve and eager to learn. Utilizing a thematic curriculum for ages three to five, Channing teachers work one-on-one with each child to help them develop their fine motor skills. Our hands-on activities are structured to help kids learn as they play. See the difference in your child that only a low, eight-to-one student-teacher ratio can provide.

CHRISTIAN MONTESSORI ACADEMY

RoseMarie Mann, Director
Laura Chisholm, Office Manager
3702 S. 90th E. Ave.
Tulsa, OK
918.628.6524
www.montessorilearning.org

In a Christ-centered environment, CMA educates the whole child using the Montessori Method. CMA's community oriented, multi-age classrooms invite learning in an enticing, stress-free setting. Our authentic Montessori materials and curriculum provide hands-on learning experiences and the joy of discovery. Our students are led by Montessori

trained guides and are encouraged to make choices to help develop a sense of independence and self-worth.
Children attending CMA are not viewed as a group, but rather as individuals working toward their full potential within our community. We believe that the impressions formed today have a lasting impact on a child's attitude towards learning and life itself. Tours and visits can be scheduled by calling the office or visiting our website. We look forward to meeting your family!

CHRIST UNITED METHODIST ELC

Contact: Laurie Pearn
3515 S. Harvard
Tulsa, OK
918.743.7673
www.cumctulsa.com
Our program is a Monday, Wednesday, Friday pre-school program. Hours are 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. There are several options as to how many days and the times children can attend. In the afternoons, we offer enrichment classes in gymnastics, music and "Bible Buddies." Our staff members are chosen for their early childhood experience and training as well as sensitivity to the individual needs of each child. We use a hands-on approach so children learn by doing. Classes are arranged in learning centers and areas of interest where the daily theme is carried out throughout the room. Parent participation is encouraged.

HAPPY CAMPERS ACADEMY

Happy Campers—Cherry Street
1819 E. 15th St.
Tulsa, OK
918.584.2779
hcatulsa@gmail.com
7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Happy Campers at Temple Israel
2004 E. 22nd Pl.
Tulsa, OK
918.747.3122
happycamperstempleisrael@gmail.com
7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Happy Campers at John Knox
(This location has school-age afterschool care and summer camp)
2929 E. 31st St.
Tulsa, OK
918.742.7656
happycampersjohnknox@gmail.com
Happy Campers Academy offers Tulsa and surrounding communities quality childcare. We accept children ages 6 weeks to pre-kindergarten, and provide parents an opportunity to view their children in the early learning center through a closed-circuit internet connection. At all three of our midtown Tulsa locations, Happy Campers utilizes a child-centered philosophy and partners with our families to provide a quality educational experience in a nurturing environment. Our highly trained staff works to get to know each individual child and his/her cognitive and developmental needs, while seeking input from families to make the home and school transition smooth and communication open for the success of the child. Through a balance of developmental play and planned educational activities, our students learn best through doing–all while having fun and expressing themselves creatively. Our teachers conduct conferences twice a year in order to build a strong home and school team. We want to keep parents informed about what their child(ren) is learning, developmental milestones that are being achieved, and suggest skills that can be practiced at home. We believe that our child-centered philosophy will foster a love for learning in these ever-important early childhood years.

HOLLAND HALL

Contact: J.P. Culley, Head of School
5666 E. 81st St.
Tulsa, OK
918.481.1111
www.hollandhall.org
Grades: Pre-school – Grade 12
Holland Hall is Tulsa's Pre-K3 through Grade 12 Independent Episcopal School. We offer an ambitious curriculum, an extensive array of exciting electives, dozens of individual and team sports, transformative arts programming, and an apprenticeship in self-reliance. Our student/teacher ratio of 10:1 means your child's teachers truly know who they are and where their strengths and passions lie. Located on a beautiful 162-acre campus, Holland Hall provides a lively and uncommonly kind community that honors the individual integrity of each child while providing the bedrock education every student needs to succeed in college, work, and the world beyond.

LAKE HILLS MONTESSORI

Contact: Jodie Whitman
5130 E. 101st St.
Tulsa, OK
918.296.9936
lakehillsmontessoritulsa.com
Lake Hills Montessori is committed to providing quality education for children ages 2-6 years in a safe, loving, and stimulating environment. Each child's day is organized to ensure successful experiences that will foster self-esteem and a love of learning. LHM offers a traditional Montessori curriculum that allows children to learn through exploration and play. In addition to providing an atmosphere of discovery, LHM offers healthy lunches, dance, Spanish, soccer, music, yoga and art. School time is 8:30 a.m. -3:00 p.m. and before/after care is 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Follow us on Instagram or Facebook!

LEGACY CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Tandi Wells, Principal
1201 N. Elm Place
Broken Arrow, OK
918.286.6794
www.legacyba.org
At Legacy Christian Academy, we partner with you in the education of your child, as well as the development of his or her character, faith, and spiritual growth. By incorporating God in all areas, our students learn to empathize and show kindness to others. Our students are being taught what it means to have a relationship with Jesus and how to be life-long followers of Him.
Here's what our parents have to say:
"We are new this year, and I'm kicking myself for not finding Legacy sooner. Between the remarkable education, the welcome environment, and the wonderful staff, I couldn't think of a better place for my child."
"The teachers and staff truly love and care about my child holistically. He's not only nurtured academically, but emotionally, socially, and spiritually. It is such a blessing to drop him off in a safe environment."
"We love the small class sizes, family-like atmosphere, excellent academics, and most of all, the discipleship and Biblical teaching that take place each day to help our children experience God's goodness and understand the importance of being a light in the darkness."

METRO CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

6363 S. Trenton Ave.
Tulsa, OK
918.745.9868
metroca.com
Located on a 60-acre campus in the heart of Tulsa at 63rd and Trenton, Metro Christian Academy is an independent Christian school serving students age three through 12th grade. They're all under one roof but with distinct areas for preschool, elementary, middle and high school.
Metro's Elementary program offers two tracks for students. One features traditional curriculum that students may join at any time. The other is a Spanish Immersion section that students may enter in Pre-K or Kindergarten and continue through 5th grade. Spanish Immersion students become bilingual by learning core subject content in Spanish including history, language arts, science, and math.
Metro's secondary school offers a range of academic programs including 15 Advanced Placement courses and eight courses for concurrent college credit. Metro offers activities for students of all ages including 11 varsity sports, debate, leadership, missions and fine arts classes like studio art, drama, band and choir.
At the heart of Metro is a sense of community. Students, parents, faculty, and staff all work together to educate and nurture students to reach their full potential. "We work to develop this culture in which everyone knows who you are," says Adam Taylor, Athletic Director. "You are somebody here. You are someone important."

MINGO VALLEY CHRISTIAN

Mrs. Lisa Padgett, Admissions
8304 S. 107th E. Ave.
Tulsa, OK
918.294.0404
www.mingovalley.org
Mingo Valley Christian (PreK-12) has been partnering with Tulsa area families for over 40 years! We are a college preparatory, non-denominational, private school, encouraging personalized learning for each student. We partner with parents and incorporate a Christian worldview into all aspects of the learning process. Our students are tomorrow's leaders, so our school culture is infused with opportunities for leadership, mentoring, and service to the Tulsa community. Learning happens best in the context of relationships, so our teachers engage personally with each student to foster academic success. We offer honors and AP courses, NHS/NJHS, concurrent college enrollment, art, computer, music, and foreign language, with technology utilized throughout all academic disciplines. Our highly regarded theatre program attracts arts patrons from across the Tulsa community. Our athletic programs include football, volleyball, basketball, soccer, cross country/track, and pom. For more information or to schedule a tour or shadowing day, please call or visit our website. You are invited to view a virtual Open House at any time at mingovalley.org/tour. Accreditation: State of Oklahoma (OPSAC); AdvancED; Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)

MISS HELEN'S PRIVATE SCHOOL

Contact: Jayme Wingo-Baker
4849 S. Mingo
Tulsa, OK
918.622.2327
www.misshelens.com
Miss Helen's Private School is a family-owned, family-focused business celebrating over 60 years. Teachers are college degreed, caring and dedicated. All pre-kindergarten classes offer music, Spanish, art, stories & science, pre-reading skills, math and dance through small group and independent activities. Small class sizes in

grades K-5 enable students to have more individualized instruction and work beyond traditional grade levels. In addition to basic academics, we offer Spanish, fine arts, and community service and charitable projects, as well as health, nutrition and fitness. After-school activities include computer tutorial, swimming and music. Serving ages 3 years through 5th grade.

MONTE CASSINO SCHOOL

Contact: Kevin Smith, Headmaster
2206 S. Lewis Ave.
Tulsa, OK
918.746.4238
www.montecassino.org

For more than 90 years, Monte Cassino School has been committed to academic excellence while educating the whole student. Beyond the classroom, Monte Cassino Students, ages PreK 3 – eighth grade, develop socially and morally within a supportive community to develop skills they will use throughout their lifetime. Monte Cassino School offers a 14:1 student/teacher ratio, students who rank in the 94th percentile of school norms for standardized testing, teachers with advanced degrees and a wide-serving support system in our REACH department. Extra-curricular opportunities abound for all students including team sports, Robotics, Rocketry, Academic Bowl, fine arts and drama and more. Led by the legacy of the Benedictine Sisters, Monte Cassino School offers a faith-filled, Catholic education.

MONTESSORI ACADEMY OF OWASSO

708 N. Atlanta St.
Owasso, OK 74055
Contact: Elizabeth Overton, Executive Director
Director@OwassoMontessori.com
918.217.8033
www.owassomontessori.com

With the help of parents and Montessori teachers who wanted educational opportunities for their children focused on individuality, personal development, and advanced academics, Montessori Academy of Owasso opened its doors in 2014. Our school has grown since its founding, now educating students from toddlers through 8th grade on our 1.33-acre campus in the heart of Owasso. A Montessori education is a child-centered approach to teaching. Each student has their own curriculum and works through lessons at their own pace. There is never pressure to perform or earn a certain score on a test. We believe students should love to learn without rewards or penalties tied to their progress. Educating the whole child - socially, emotionally, and academically - is the hallmark of our school community.



RHEMA CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

1025 W. Kenosha St.
Broken Arrow, OK
www.rhemachildcare.com

Rhema Child Development Center is committed to providing the finest quality programs to help your child develop academically, socially, and spiritually. These goals are accomplished with dual emphasis on Christian values and Bible truths as well as academic programs in our classroom activities. Additionally, we believe that the first step in learning is developing a healthy self-concept in each child. We want to help each child feel that he/she is worthwhile and a valuable person in his/her world, and in the eyes of God. The enrollment process is easy! We encourage you to come by, between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday–Friday, to take a tour, meet our teachers, and get to know RCDC a little better. We will also have a packet of information waiting for you, along with a few forms to be filled out.

RIVERFIELD COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

Contact: Kacey Davenport
2433 W. 61st St.
Tulsa, OK
918.446.3553
www.riverfield.org

Riverfield provides a student-centered approach to education for students 8 weeks through 12th Grade with an innovative program of authentic, experiential learning in which individuality is valued and the needs of the whole student are honored. Small class sizes, along with the collaborative nature of our classrooms, provide the opportunity for students to cultivate leadership, interpersonal skills, and the confidence needed for success today and tomorrow. Personalized programming and flexible scheduling offer Middle and Upper School students the opportunity to develop talents and explore interests in a college prep setting. The 120-acre campus encompasses a barnyard, hiking trails, gardens, freshwater system, outdoor classrooms and athletic fields. Accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and Oklahoma Private School Accreditation Commission (OPSAC).

SCHOOL OF SAINT MARY

Contact: Ms. Sarah Edwards, Admissions
1365 E. 49th Pl.
Tulsa, OK
918.749.9361
www.schoolofsaintmary.com

The School of Saint Mary carries out the educational mission of the Church - educating students in peace, justice, and human rights, according to Gospel principles and Catholic tradition. The school strives to promote academic excellence, to be responsible stewards, and to motivate students to give generously of self in an attitude of Christian charity.
Quick Facts:
*Four of the past six valedictorians at Bishop Kelley High School are graduates of the School of Saint Mary.
*In annual standardized testing, our middle school students test like high school graduates.
*99% of parents say the School instills a commitment to the Faith.

SOCCERCITY TULSA

Contact: Dustin Knight
5817 S. 118th East Ave.
Tulsa, OK
918.249.0044
www.soccercitytulsa.com

Ages: 18 mos. – 9 yrs.
Step onto the field during any Lil' Kickers class, and you will find it transformed into a world created just for your child. Our well-trained coaches will thrill your child with 50 minutes of highly creative, high energy and age-appropriate activities that serve as a great introduction to soccer, and help children master developmental milestones appropriate for their age. Because Lil' Kickers is first and foremost a child development program, our purpose is really to help children mature on all levels. Our program focuses on helping children build strong physical, intellectual and emotional skills that will help them be successful on and off the soccer field. We believe in teaching children in ways that suit their developmental level. So, you won't see adult-like skill drills in our classes, but you will see teaching methods specifically designed to create an atmosphere that is effective and fun. You will also see happy, confident and sweaty kids who are eager to learn and want to keep coming back for more. Whether your child is new to soccer or has already developed a love for the game, the progressive nature of Lil' Kickers offers a place for children at every level. Our convenient class times provide families options to accommodate multiple children and busy schedules.
2nd Winter session runs through March 13th. Open enrollment, SIGN UP TODAY!
*Spring break camp will be March 15th - 19th *
Spring Lil' Kickers will begin March 22nd. Spring registration will be open by mid February

UNIVERSITY SCHOOL

Contact: Debra Price, Director
326 S. College Ave.
Tulsa, OK
918.631.5060
Debra-price@utulsa.edu
www.utulsa.edu/uschool

The mission of University School is to challenge gifted students with a dynamic curriculum in a nurturing academic environment. We serve students from age 3 through 8th grade. Our program is well rounded and includes art, music, physical education, foreign language, and computer classes for all students. Located on The University of Tulsa campus, our beautiful facility provides a unique setting and resources that few schools can match. University School students benefit from a rich variety of learning opportunities and interactions with college professors and students as they endeavor to maximize their potential, develop creativity, and become responsible citizens.

TULSA ZOO

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I'M A TULSA KID

BY SHEEBA ATIQI

Sophie Raskin: Singer/Songwriter

As the pandemic of 2020 get longer by days and months, 17-year-old Sophie Raskin decided to take her extra time and focus on her passion. Sophie worked as a nanny between song writing and being a senior at Booker T. Washington. All the hard work payed off, and Sophie was able to write and record her first EP!

TK: How did the pandemic affect you, and what did you do to pass the time?
Sophie: Because of the pandemic, I was definitely presented with an excess amount of time. I turned to music as an outlet, not only to pass the time, but express myself. It was a good way to disconnect from screens and the boredom of not being able to leave my house. I was able to write 10+ songs, two of which were featured on my EP. I also used the time organized with the musicians to make recording possible. I was also nannying for part of quarantine, which was a big reason I was able to financially make this project happen.

TK: How long have you been singing and song writing?
Sophie: I have been singing since I was little. My dad is a musician, and he really helped create my love for music. As I got older, it became more and more of a passion. I got my first guitar in fifth grade, and I wrote my first song when I was a freshman in high school and haven't stopped since.

TK: What was the inspiration for your EP?
Sophie: There wasn't one specific thing that inspired the songs in my EP. They were written over a span of three years, so my life and the person I was when I wrote each song was drastically different from the next. I really wrote what was inspiring to me at the time.

TK: What made this project so unique to you?
Sophie: This project felt so unique to me because I was finally able to create something for others to hear. I have always had big dreams or ambitions, but some of them have been too big for me to reach. I always wanted to release my music but was too scared because of fear of judgment. It intimidated me that others would be able to know some of my personal thoughts. But I pushed myself to not let that fear control me.

TK: What advice do you have for others who would like to follow in your footsteps?
Sophie: To not let something that might seem out of reach be inaccessible.

TK: Where's your favorite place in Tulsa to find inspiration?
Sophie: Nature. It has always been very magical to me and definitely an inspiration to my music, even if a song isn't directly about it. Sometimes even looking out the window to my backyard or going to the park near my house.

TK: Who inspires you?
Sophie: One of my biggest musical inspirations is Amy Winehouse. Her style of music and voice is so beautiful. I love jazz. The way she combined modern music with jazz is so incredibly unique and innovative. My father also inspires me. He is my root for music and why I have always loved doing it.



TK: What other hobbies do you have?
Sophie: Other than writing music I also have gotten into writing scripts. I have written a couple of short films and stories, while also starting a couple of plays/musicals.

TK: What do you want to be when you grow up?
Sophie: I would love to pursue music as a profession. It has always been my dream. I am also very passionate about the environment and climate activism and would love to go into a field regarding protecting the earth as well.

TK: What is a fun fact about you?
Sophie: I don't know if this is necessarily a fun fact, but when I was younger, I was so incredibly shy. My mom took me to audition as a young child, and I refused to get on stage to audition. My fears and passions just didn't seem to align. But I pushed myself out of my comfort zone because performing is what I have always loved doing, even though it still scares me to this day. And one other fun fact is that I am releasing a single later this month that I have been recording with one of my friends, Dylan Wagman.

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