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Three Steps for Building a Great Relationship with Your Child Care Provider

Many parents agree that finding the right child care provider can be a nerve-wracking and lengthy process. Even when you've found the right provider, it can still be difficult to leave your child in someone else's care. But forming a good relationship with your child's teachers and child care team can help bring you peace of mind and even improve your child's learning experience.

"Children benefit from consistent, safe and nurturing environments, which is what we strive to provide at Primrose®. We also make every effort to partner with parents to extend and reinforce learning at home through daily updates, weekly classroom schedules, at-home resources and more," says Gia Patel, Franchise Owner of Primrose School of Broken Arrow. "This ultimately helps us foster mutual respect and open communication between home and school."

At Primrose School of Broken Arrow, a high-quality early education and care provider, teachers work closely with parents to support children's development and learning. However, building trusted relationships still requires some effort from all involved. To build and maintain a great partnership with your family's child care provider or your child's teacher, consider the following:

Do your homework. To help find the right provider for your family, spend time researching different options and considering factors that are important to you, like school safety and early learning approach. Primrose has a comprehensive Safe School Plan and an exclusive approach, called Balanced Learning®, which offers a balance of purposeful play and nurturing guidance from teachers. Choosing a provider you feel good about and trust will bring you peace of mind, and a great parent-teacher relationship will likely form more naturally.

Make communication a priority. It's important to invest in your relationship with your child care provider as they help your child learn and grow. Talk regularly with your child's teacher to provide helpful information about your child, ask what you can do at home to support your child's development and share your appreciation for what's going well in the classroom. At Primrose, parents receive reports about their child's school day, photos from the classroom, resources to use at home and reminders about upcoming activities through an electronic communications system called 360Connect.

Address concerns immediately. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's care, discuss them with the teacher or school director as soon as possible. If there is a problem, it can't be solved unless someone knows about it, and providers would prefer to know if something upsets you before it becomes a bigger issue. By sharing your concerns when they arise, you can work together to find a solution.

Learn about the **Primrose Schools *Balanced Learning* approach** and Primrose School of Broken Arrow by visiting PrimroseBA.com or calling 918.355.6827.

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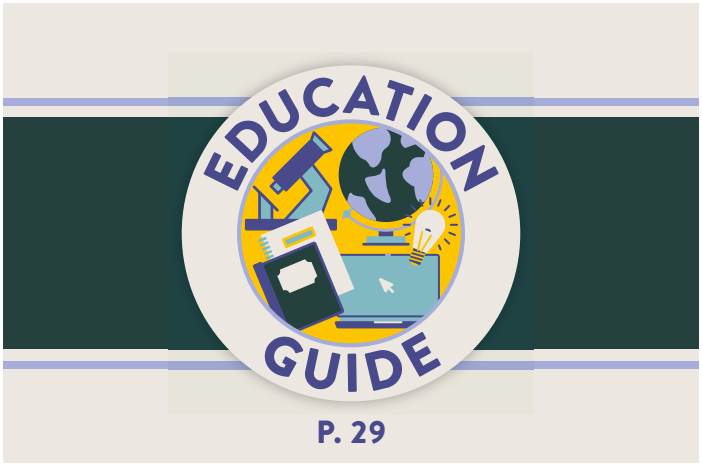
PRIMROSE® SCHOOLS Balanced Learning®





Contents

January 2023
VOLUME XXXVI | ISSUE 1



P. 29



PHOTO COURTESY TULSA OILERS

COMMUNITY CALENDAR | P. 45



PHOTO COURTESY: LAKE HILLS MONTESSORI

Montessori and Reggio Emilia:
CHILD-CENTERED LEARNING

P. 22

6
EDITOR'S NOTE

7
NEWS & NOTES

8
WHATS GOING ONLINE?

10
BABIES & TODDLERS
Tips for Fostering Independent Play
By Alicia Kobilnyk

12
SCHOOL AGE
Helping Kids Create a Vision Board the S.M.A.R.T. Way
By Dr. Tamecca Rogers

14
TWEENS & TEENS
Spring Semester: The Final Push for College Applications
By Julia Wenger Watson

16
GREEN COUNTRY GROWN-UP
Traci Manuel: A Teacher with Heart
By Nancy A. Moore

18
GET COOKING
Re-thinking Family Dinners for the New Year
By Natalie Mikles

20
BOOKS
J Is for January, Jonah, Jasmine, Jennifer and Jaxon!
Focus on First Name Letters for Print Knowledge This Month
By Laura Raphael, MA, MLIS

22
FEATURE
Montessori and Reggio Emilia: Child-Centered Learning
By Mikaela LeBlanc

25
EDUCATION
Choosing a School to Fit Your Child

26
FAMILY MEMOIR
Tulsa Writer's Memoir Is a Poignant Portrait of Being a "Glass Child"
By Betty Casey

29
TULSAKIDS 2023
Education Guide

40
SPONSORED SECTION
School Highlights

42
SPONSORED SECTION
Ask the Experts

43
COMMUNITY CALENDAR
January 2023
By Tara Rittler

Pistol Pete and Boomer may not see eye to eye on all things, but there's one thing we can all agree on:

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Schools, Schools and More Schools

NOTHING MADE ME more anxious than trying to figure out the best school options for my kids. I grew up in Stillwater (mostly), and everyone went to their neighborhood school, which all funneled into the same junior high, which funneled into one high school. I did not grow up with the idea of choice.

Fast forward to my three kids. As a former teacher, I know that kids benefit from small class sizes, teachers who understand curriculum and how to individualize it, school environments that support teachers and students, encourage mutual respect and cultural understanding, and have developmentally appropriate expectations as well as providing a rich environment of the arts, academics and athletics. That would be my dream school. Did I get it? No. Not entirely. There's too much other nonsense drowning out what's important, but I will say my kids received an excellent education.

From preschool through post-graduate work, they have gone to 15 different schools, public and private. Would I recommend any of them? Yes, but they might not be the best place for your child. Each kid is different.

In this issue of TulsaKids, you'll find an article about two types of child-centered education that have greatly influenced early learning, usually identified as age 8 and younger. If your child's school uses centers, hands-on/experiential learning, manipulatives and natural objects, then you will see where many of those concepts originated.

If you are looking for a school for your child, read our checklist of things to do as you research schools. You'll also find a list of questions to ask to help you narrow your choices. It's also a good list to apply to your child's current school. Are there ways that you can support and help teachers and administrators?

As you look ahead to the 2023, Dr. Tamecca Rogers writes about doing a vision board with your kids. It's a fun and worthwhile project for everyone in the family.

Happy New Year!



Betty Casey

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER
AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

tulsakids

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2023 PINNACLE AWARD **WINNERS ANNOUNCED**

YWCA Tulsa, in partnership with the Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women, recently announced the honorees for the 2023 Pinnacle Awards celebrating exceptional women of Tulsa. We especially want to congratulate TulsaKids' columnist Dr. Tamecca Rogers for her Arts and Humanities Award.

WINNERS ARE:

ANNA C. ROTH LEGACY AWARD:
Rose Washington-Jones
Chief executive officer of Tulsa Economic Development Corporation (TEDC)

ARTS AND HUMANITIES AWARD:
Dr. Tamecca Rogers
A Tulsa native, Dr. Tamecca Rogers, filmmaker, author, publisher, columnist and CEO of a nonprofit organization. She serves as the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Tulsa Tech and volunteers her time to further DEI education across the state. Her work empowers women and helps teachers and parents approach complex topics and issues with children such as race, inclusion, identity and self-love.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD:
Irma Chajecki
Irma Chajecki is a bilingual immigrant specialist for the American Dream Center and has spent more than 40 years helping immigrants in Tulsa.

CORPORATE BUSINESS AWARD:
Elian Hurtado Jarve
The founder of Galera Business Consulting, Elian Hurtado Jarve is a business consultant with over 20 years of expertise in helping financial companies increase revenue and grow their presence in Hispanic/Latinx communities. During the pandemic, Elian partnered with the Avanzado Juntos loan program to aid more than 75 undocumented Tulsa business owners by helping them access support funds they needed to stay afloat.

EDUCATION AWARD:
Dr. Sarah Wyatt
Dr. Sarah Wyatt, director of strategy and operations for the Tulsa Higher Education Consortium, has dedicated her career to supporting students in Tulsa-area higher education institutions. A volunteer and advocate for education, Dr. Wyatt pursues equity, access and opportunity for students in both K-12 and higher education settings.

ENTREPRENEUR AWARD:
Anita Williams
Citizens in Anita Williams' north Tulsa community have an average life expectancy of 11 years less than citizens in south Tulsa, and she aims to change that. After a lengthy career as a registered nurse, Anita founded A&M Health Care Clinic, a primary care clinic in North Tulsa created to promote health equity and access for adults 14 years of age and older.

HEALTH & WELLNESS AWARD:
Deneisha Johnson
Deneisha Johnson is an advocate for behavioral health in the Tulsa community, serving as the current board chair and the public relations chair for Counseling & Recovery Services of Oklahoma. She hopes to leave a legacy of helping those who struggle with mental health and substance abuse.

RISING STAR AWARD:
Ashley Townsend
Ashley Townsend is a Vice President and Community Manager at Chase Bank and is the first person in Tulsa to occupy this role. Ashley partners with local businesses and community groups to provide free financial education workshops and resources to help close the racial wealth gap in Tulsa.

CORPORATE CHAMPION AWARD:
The Persimmon Group
The management consulting industry is traditionally dominated by men, but the Persimmon Group is breaking barriers with women representing 50 percent of its senior leadership and 71 percent of its senior consultant positions. Persimmon has also prioritized the recruitment and advancement of women of color, who currently hold 28 percent of senior consultant positions.

Honorees will be celebrated at the annual Pinnacle Awards, set for Friday, March 24, 2023, at Cox Business Convention Center in downtown Tulsa. The event honors the investment that women are making in Tulsa and financially supports the work of YWCA Tulsa to empower women and eliminate racism.



44TH ANNUAL MLK **COMMEMORATIVE PARADE JAN. 16**

"We Are Stronger When Working Together" is the theme for the 44th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Parade that will celebrate the revered civil rights leader's legacy on Jan. 16, 2023. Each year, over 100 entries participate in the parade featuring themed floats, music and marchers. The parade begins at the corner of N. Detroit Ave. and John Hope Franklin Blvd. and meanders through historic Greenwood Avenue to Archer, ending near ONEOK Field.

"If there's one thing that Dr. King and Tulsa's MLK Parade continues to remind us, it's that the flame of hope is one that endures and we must work to keep the dream alive," said Pleas Thompson, president of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration Society. "By coming together on this special day, we honor Dr. King's message of peace, love and equality and recognize that we are always more powerful when working together. I can think of no better theme for our parade and look forward to seeing everybody there on January 16."

The goal of the MLK Day Parade is for participants of all ages to have fun, remember Dr. King's legacy and how they can be a part of keeping his dream alive. Parade marshals, security personnel and volunteers will be posted along the parade route to ensure the safety of participants and guests. The parade begins at 11 a.m. and is free to the public.

Find a map of the parade route at **mlktulsa.com**. Please visit the website for the latest parade updates.

READING PARTNERS **SEEKING MORE VOLUNTEERS**

Last year, Reading Partners provided literacy support to 36 percent more Tulsa-area students than the year before.

Reading Partners continues to serve more students and anticipates a growing need for literacy volunteers. Hours are flexible, and volunteer tutors will follow a provided curriculum. No prior experience is necessary. To find out how to help a student in as little as one hour a week, go to **readingpartners.org**


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WHAT'S GOING ONLINE?



JUN MASUDA & NAO OTA. PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOSH NEW.

CONTESTS & GIVEAWAYS

Get an entry link to the following giveaway at **tulsakids.com/contests.**

CINDERELLA TICKET GIVEAWAY

From Jan. 23-Feb. 5, enter to win a family pack of 5 tickets to Tulsa Ballet's production of *Cinderella!* Two winners will be chosen; each will receive five tickets.



TULSAKIDS' **BABY HANDBOOK**

Will 2023 bring a new addition to your family? The TulsaKids Baby Handbook is full of helpful information for new and expecting parents, including local and national resources. Read it now at **tulsakids.com/baby**!

WHAT ARE YOUR FAMILY'S **GOALS FOR 2023?**

We asked our Facebook followers to share their family's goals for 2023. Here's what they had to say:

"Become more organized and vacation more. Work on healthy living."
STACIE R.

"Eat at home more! Reduce waste and clutter. Read more books and watch less TV."
HEATHER C.

TIMELY TOPICS AT **TULSAKIDS.COM**

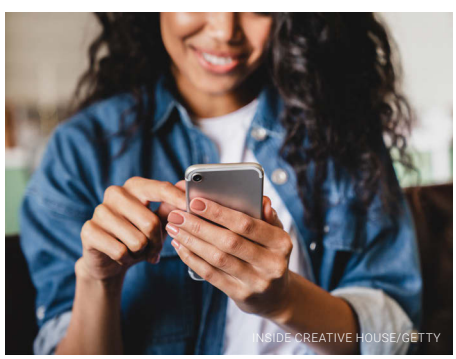
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INSIDE CREATIVE HOUSE/GETTY

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING **TO DO THIS WEEKEND?**

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Tips for Fostering Independent Play

By **Alicia Kobilnyk**





> The goal is not to bail on your child or dodge playtime forever. It is simply an exercise in **normalizing your gradual distancing** during quiet play time.

> A pivotal part of **encouraging independent play** is to make time for **quality, intentional time** together.

WHEN MY FIRST child was 2, I found myself sitting on my couch during a playdate, nonchalantly sending her off to the playroom, while my friend's son clung tightly to his mother's side, pulling at her arm and refusing to move until she, too, came to the playroom.

After much cajoling and a patient introduction to the toy options before him, she came back to her spot, only to be rejoined immediately. Her son sat in front of her, smiling broadly and setting up the game he wanted to play with her. She looked at her rapidly cooling tea, sent a longing glance in the direction of the playroom where she could hear my little one happily playing alone and faced me, a mix of emotions on her face. "How do you get her to do that?" I was so accustomed to a child fond of independent play that I had not considered what a gift it was.

Truth be told, though I'd been in early childhood education before I became a mother, I entered motherhood as awkwardly and with as many learning moments as the next person. So it was that I looked at my friend, whose child begged for fresh fruit and legumes rather than cheesy noodles, whose mastery of baby sign had fostered early language in her son when, at that time, all my child would do was grunt and point, and I realized I had no answer for her. How did I foster independent play in my child? The answer was a mixture of classroom habits so second nature they did not register to my awareness and a good amount of dumb luck.

That day, I had no real help for my friend, other than encouraging my child to slowly lure hers away (and reheating her tea). Since then I have had another child who very much needed to gain that skill set. I also have a classroom of little friends who give me ample opportunity to hone my skills and test my theories. Today, I have a few more ideas for those of us who very much would like to finish our hot beverage, take a deep breath and enjoy the knowledge that our children are able to search out, engage with and be enriched by their environment without our direct involvement.

A YES SPACE

It all starts, for me, with security. Knowing they are in a safe space, set up for their success, allows me to "drop the rope," as the saying goes, and invite them to take the lead. This requires a "Yes Space."

A "Yes Space" is a room or area where anything your child can reasonably do is acceptable, safe and appropriate. A Yes Space for a mobile infant, for example, would be enclosed, baby-proofed and supplied with a variety of soft dolls, lightweight balls, a few simple blocks and plenty of things worthy of a good gnaw from tiny teeth. A parent would be close by, of course, to hear and see any signs of distress, but could quietly step away for a quick phone call, a dishwasher load or a snack.

As children grow, a Yes Space will shift. A toddler's Yes Space is still enclosed, though possibly more spacious. There would be a new assortment of pretend play items, some vehicles and even some non-chokable loose parts (open-ended materials your child can use for all sorts of things).

A Yes Space grows with your child and, if you're consistent, you'll find it eases much of your stress as your child can enter into play in a safe space where they feel ownership. You can relax knowing the environment is doing the first level of guidance you would otherwise have to set down your coffee and provide.

A WORD ABOUT SAFETY

If you're unsure about what constitutes a choking hazard, consider a ping pong ball. Anything smaller than that can get lodged in a child's throat. Assume all children younger than 3 are capable of mouthing and potentially choking on household items/toys and allow access to such things only with direct supervision.

A handy item I recommend all parents consider buying is a choke tester or choke tube. If an object fits inside, it is best not to leave it out for young children. This is especially important if your playroom or Yes Space will be used by multiple ages of children.


AARONAMAT/GETTY

EASING THE TRANSITION

Providing a space is not always enough for a child to successfully dive into independent play, especially if your child is temperamentally cautious or anxious by nature. This is where gradual guidance and support from a parent really help. Sitting on the floor with your children is a key way to make them feel supported and loved by you, so it's a natural place to start. As you play together, let the child lead. Take a passive role in play and observe them. In time, you may sense your child relaxing into their play and focusing less on your immediate presence. Slowly extricate yourself from play, either openly ("Mama's going to go make some lunch") or discretely.

The goal is not to bail on your child or dodge playtime forever. It is simply an exercise in normalizing your gradual distancing during quiet play time. It may take some time, but as everyone settles in to the "new normal," this mundane level of separation will become less and less unusual and ideally will fulfill your child's growing autonomy.

MAKE TIME FOR YOUR CHILD

Finally, a pivotal part of encouraging independent play is to make time for quality, intentional time together. If your child knows that you will join them for a game, snuggles or a favorite pastime soon, it will likely be easier for them to accept a temporary disengagement.

As your child grows, their ability to understand this delayed gratification will increase. For younger toddlers, you may have to create a routine (setting aside a regular chunk of time after breakfast, for example) or play with them before trying to step away.

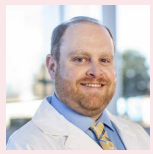
In the end, every child is an individual and will have their own individual needs as they grow into independent young people. While it may take time, patience and some trial and error to reach your goal, one day you will look up and find yourself alone with your thoughts, watching an engaged and focused child on a play journey all their own. TK

Alicia Kobilnyk is an Early Childhood Educator who works with young toddlers. She finds joy and inspiration to write in their cheeky shenanigans, as well as those of her two daughters.

PJ'S CORNER



Scoliosis: What Parents Need to Know



Q & A WITH

Dr. Mark Schwartz

PEDIATRIC ORTHOPEDIC SURGEON

Q: What is scoliosis and how is it diagnosed?

A: Scoliosis is any abnormal curvature of the spine, typically diagnosed during childhood and into adolescence. It's most commonly seen in teens, but occasionally we will see it in younger children, at which point we will call it early-onset scoliosis. The majority of the cases we see are usually in younger adolescents, where it gets picked up either at a well-child check or in schools that still do scoliosis screenings. Typically, it's diagnosed with a physical exam, and then if there are positive physical exam findings, we can diagnose it further using X-ray.

Q: When is scoliosis typically diagnosed?

A: The majority of the diagnoses occur in early adolescence. Occasionally, they are found later, but the majority of scoliosis tends to grow and develop and become bigger as kids are going through growth spurts.

Q: What are the treatment options for an adolescent or child with scoliosis?

A: Our standard treatment option for mild curvatures is just observation. We tend to see these kids about every six months to get new X-rays to make sure that their curve is not getting bigger.

If a curve has gotten beyond a mild diagnosis to more of a moderate curvature, we treat those with a special type of bracing. Unfortunately, the braces don't make the curve go away, but we try to hold their curve as they're continuing to grow to try to prevent the curve from getting bigger.

If bracing doesn't work, or if their diagnosis isn't made until the curve is severe, surgery then becomes the option. We know that bigger curves tend to continue to grow and progress throughout life. Curves that stay below 50 degrees tend not to continue to grow throughout life, so typically won't need further treatment once the child is finished growing.

Q: Is there anything that can be done to prevent scoliosis?

A: There's nothing specific at this point that we can do to prevent scoliosis.

Q: It sounds like early diagnosis is really important. What signs should parents look for?

A: Absolutely. The earlier that we're able to diagnose and catch those curves, the better chance we have of preventing the need for surgery.

One of the most important things parents can do is maintain their child's yearly checks-ups with their pediatrician or family doctor. Often, parents may also notice their child's back just doesn't look straight. Sometimes we see asymmetry of the shoulders, waistline or shoulder blades. Their child may have a little bit of a rib hump that sticks out on one side over the other.

For the complete interview, visit TulsaKids.com

If you have a question for one of the Saint Francis pediatricians to answer, please email **editor@tulsakids.com**

The Children's Hospital at Saint Francis

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Helping Kids Create a Vision Board the S.M.A.R.T. Way

By **Dr. Tamecca Rogers**, Ph.D.





Vision boards for kids and adults can be a great way to set goals for the new year.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TAMECCA ROGERS

WHEW! HOW DID 2022 get away from us so fast? We survived the holidays and are embarking on a new year! Many of us have been in survival mode for the last few years. COVID, social issues, politics, escalated cost-of-living prices and now the flu and RSV are wreaking havoc in our homes. Sometimes, the last thing we think about is setting goals with our children. However, besides creating great memories, carving out time to set goals with our children can set them up with essential life skills, which will teach them to take responsibility for themselves.

One way I like to help my 11-year-old son, Keith Ross, with his goal setting is by helping him create a vision board. A vision board is a visual illustration of what you want to acquire or accomplish. At the beginning of each year, I usually get together with my friends to create a vision board, but last year, I thought it would be cool to ask my son if he would like to make one. Once I explained to him what it was, he embraced the idea. The vision board is a great visual reminder of what we are working toward. Ultimately, it can keep us motivated to achieve our goals throughout the year.

Before I give you a few tips about helping your children make a vision board, it's important to mention collaborating with them to set goals. Remember, as parents, just like we wouldn't want anyone to tell us our goals, we don't want to dictate our children's goals. But we want to guide them, so they are realistic and attainable.

For example, last year my son wanted to add a fancy Corvette to his board. I responded, "Um, sir, is that a toy Corvette?" Well, it wasn't. His goal was to buy a car in 2022! So, after discussing the legal driving age (which is clearly not 11 years old) and the requirements to obtain a driver's license, we looked up the cost of his dream car. After that, he agreed to take it off his list for now. I explained to him it's great to dream big, but we should use SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely) goals for the vision board.

After I sold him on the SMART goals, I explained that a goal without a plan is just a dream. We used the Goal Setting for Children worksheet to write down our goals and how we planned to achieve them. We devised a system to track our progress and hold each other accountable. We did that by breaking our goals into smaller goals and giving ourselves deadlines with the disclaimer that if we don't meet the deadline, we can reassess the goal and change the timeline if needed. With my son, I knew he had to see his progress, so we created a progress graph.

When all the work was done, we both were eager to start cutting, gluing and pasting. I had a few magazines around the house, but as a working mom, I always look for ways to make life easier. So, I ordered some vision board clip art books from Amazon, and we both loved them. I spread the magazines I had and the ones I purchased from Amazon on the table, along with our supplies, glue, markers, poster board and, of course, our worksheet. We rolled up our sleeves and got started. We meant business.

I let him use his creative side without directing him where to put a picture or what looked best. If he wanted my opinion, I would have been glad to interject, but he didn't; he took it and ran with it. Keith enjoyed making the vision board so much last year that he invited his friends to join us this year.

Keith's friends, Jareon, Dareon, Legend and Da'Corier, joined



> "I learned so much about what was going on at their school, which included their favorite classes, not-so-favorite classes and girls they had a crush on. There was a lot of laughing and redirecting, but the mission was accomplished."



us in setting goals and making vision boards. Although sometimes the process with five boys was like herding cats on a rainy day, listening to them come up with their goals made my heart smile and my cheeks hurt from laughing. I learned so much about what was going on at their school, which included their favorite classes, not-so-favorite classes and girls they had a crush on. There was a lot of laughing and redirecting, but the mission was accomplished.

In short, Jareon's and Dareon's main goals are to get straight A's on their report cards, build a platform to be a gaming influencer and join the basketball and football teams. Legend's main goals are to make A's in two of his most challenging subjects and to go camping. Da'Corier's goals are to make straight A's and to earn a spot on the football team.

Keith Ross' main goals are to make a B in Geography and to make $100,000, which led me to a conversation with the boys about having $100,000 dreams with a two-dollar work ethic. In other words, to accomplish your goals, you must work for them. I think I got my point across without sounding too preachy.

Ultimately, finding a downside to creating a vision board with your children is hard. Keep it fun. Let them be creative. Don't apply any pressure. Enjoy your quality time together and reiterate the power of positive thinking and achieving your goals. TK

Dr. Tamecca Rogers is Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Tulsa Technology Center. She is a writer and mom to three boys who love adventures.

GOAL-SETTING WORKSHEET

A simple worksheet from kiddiematters.com helps kids understand that goals require action, and sometimes the work of achieving goals can be difficult or slow. You can create your own worksheet.

Include the following:

1. Ask kids to write down three goals for themselves.
2. Underneath each goal, ask them to write an action plan on how they will reach their goals.
3. At the bottom, have kids answer or think about the following questions:
   - What are some positive qualities about you that will help you reach your goals?
   - What might get in the way of your reaching your goals?
   - How will you monitor your progress toward your goal?

Spring Semester: The Final Push for College Applications

By **Julie Wenger Watson**





SPRING SEMESTER SENIOR year can feel much like a manic race to the finish line. Heaped on to the academic, extracurricular and social demands of a regular school semester are the numerous activities associated with graduation. Looming above it all like a dark cloud of dread is the college application process. For parents and kids navigating that final stretch, Staci Pennington, senior admissions counselor at the University of Tulsa, offers a few tips.

SCHOOL VISITS

According to Pennington, visiting the campuses of prospective colleges is one of the most important things students can do as part of their decision-making process. In general, she encourages students to schedule visits to two or three schools on their list. Although there may be costs associated with travel, meals and hotel stays, campus visits are free to students and their guests.

"But what they gain from just going to the campus can be priceless," Pennington says.

Visits are valuable because they allow students to talk to admissions counselors and professors, while also getting a feel for the campus climate and how the students interact.

"I try to remind students that a lot of what they see and how they are treated on those visits are all indicators of how it's going to be if they choose a particular campus," she says. "Those types of things are really important to look at, no matter which school you're visiting."

When visiting, Pennington suggests setting up appointments with professors to provide an opportunity to ask more detailed questions about particular majors or research programs, as well as any scholarships available for specific areas of study. She also encourages visiting students to talk to students currently on campus.

"We use our university ambassadors to give the tours. I always tell my families to ask these university ambassadors questions about what they like or don't like about the school," Pennington says.

Pennington also emphasizes the importance of asking about resources for student support — everything from financial and mental health to career centers and tutoring.

DEADLINES

Meeting the general application deadline is obviously important. However, as Pennington points out, it's important to pay attention to other deadlines, too.

"At TU, we call them 'special programs,'" she says. "These are really just any programs that might take a separate application other than the application to the university for admission."

Those types of applications are generally due in January or February. At TU, this includes the Presidential Scholarship, honors programs, research programs and the Pathway to Sports program, which creates opportunities for students to obtain practical skills and experiences in preparation for a career in the sports industry.

"These are programs that enhance a student's time on campus," she says. "If there are programs you're interested in at a university, whether or not you've decided to attend, make sure you know those deadlines."

OUTSIDE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Although Pennington admits the process can be onerous, she encourages students to take time early in the spring semester to research and apply for "outside scholarships," monies awarded by an organization other than the government or your college. Examples include scholarships sponsored by a community or cultural group, a civic organization, or a parent's employer.

"I tell students to apply, apply, apply," she says. "The hunt for outside scholarships can be very painstaking and can get overwhelming. Start early and tackle it in small chunks over time."

ASSESS FINANCIAL AID

It's important for students and their families to fully understand what college will cost and


JACOBLUND/GETTY

> "Parents are a big part of this process. As parents, we need to be giving them the tools they need — **encourage** them to get in touch with their admissions counselors, gather information, pay attention to student programming, activities and clubs," she says. "But I think students have to figure things out for themselves."

what financial aid will cover, making sure to compare "apples to apples." Does the financial aid package cover tuition only? Tuition and books? Having a comprehensive list of what the student will actually be paying is very important. Personalized appointments with university representatives can help make this determination.

UPDATE APPLICATIONS

Consider updating your applications if fall semester grades or new standardized test scores reflect a significant improvement.

"At TU, you have until February 1 to give us updated transcripts and test scores that might boost your academic scholarship higher," she says. "Let's say you had a tough junior year and received some C's for the first time ever, but then made straight A's your seventh [fall] semester, and your GPA shot up."

Cut-off dates for updating academic information vary from school to school, so be aware of those deadlines.

STUDENTS ULTIMATELY DECIDE

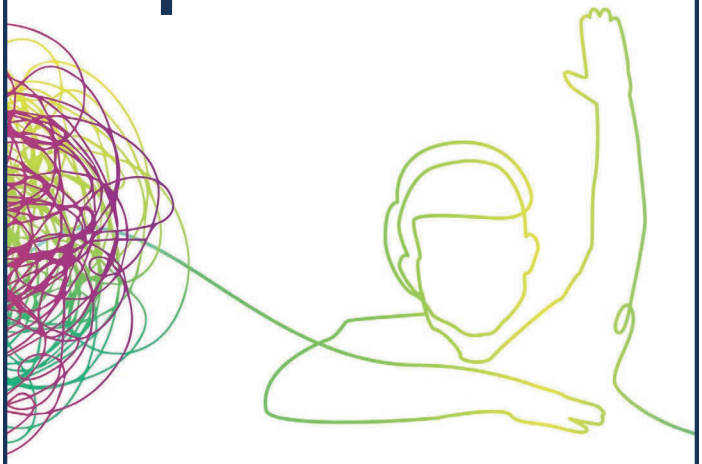
Although Pennington believes parents are an important part of the process of finding a college home, ultimately, students have to make their own decisions.

"Parents are a big part of this process. As parents, we need to be giving them the tools they need — encourage them to get in touch with their admissions counselors, gather information, pay attention to student programming, activities and clubs," she says. "But I think students have to figure things out for themselves." TK

Julie Wenger Watson is a freelance writer who's worked in all aspects of music promotion. She's also Co-Director of "Live From Cain's," a public radio show pilot.

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Traci Manuel: A Teacher with Heart

By **Nancy A. Moore**





PHOTO COURTESY: TRACI MANUEL

TRACI MANUEL DEDICATES countless hours and a lot of heart to creating and presenting interesting content that will engage and inspire young minds in her 10th grade English class at Booker T. Washington High School. Her heart for teaching has caught the attention of many (including me – she taught my son!). Recently, she was one of 12 teachers in Oklahoma nominated for the 2023 Teacher of the Year. Despite the demanding work, long hours and low pay, Manuel talks about the reasons for choosing her profession and offers advice for those considering a teaching career.

TK: Why did you decide to pursue a teaching career?

Manuel: As a young girl, my grandmother, who was a devoted English teacher and dean, would always stop me in mid-sentence and say, "Behind that preposition." I would begin to talk again, and she would say in a stern, fiery voice, "You cannot end your thoughts with a preposition at the end. You need to sit down and understand the English language." Needless to say, I had to develop tough skin at a young age when articulating my thoughts because my entire village was full of strong educators who demanded the best at all times and gave me skills that would one day make me an effective teacher.

Then came my senior year in high school. I knew the next step was college because this was the expectation in my family; however, I came across an advisor who did not believe the same for me. I went into the advisor's office during a lunch break to sit down and discuss my college options, and she told me that I did not have any options for where I wanted to go. I was broken, discouraged and ready to throw in the towel; however, my mentor, Mrs. Joe Bright, director of North Mabee Boys and Girls Club, explained in our weekly pep talk, "You can't let one person determine your future. You are going to have to do the research, write your plan of action, take the ACT prep classes and begin making it happen. Let's get to work." She did not show me any sympathy; she continued to push me to believe in the unbelievable.

Three months later, after writing tedious college entrance essays every night and filling out scholarships while helping young people at the North Mabee, I won national presidential scholarships and local scholarships, received acceptances to several colleges and spoke at the Governor's Mansion. It was all because of that tough skin of resilience that my village helped me develop along the way. With the help that was given to me, I, too, wanted to continue to pass the torch of learning and encouragement to the young minds of today.

TK: You didn't major in education in college. Can you share the path you took to becoming an educator?

Manuel: On my road to becoming a teacher, I have taken the road that Robert Frost discussed in the poem, *The Road Not Taken*. Unlike many of my colleagues who majored in elementary or secondary education with a particular emphasis, and are truly extraordinary in the profession, I don't share the same path. I majored in English Literature, substituted for a month in TPS, and accepted a graduate assistantship through the Ronald McNair Scholars Program to pursue my master's full-time. While studying the Achievement Gap, I discovered my purpose was to teach.

From there, I returned to Oklahoma, accepting a long-term substitute position and later a teacher's assistant, parent facilitator and finally a classroom English teacher. Just like I took a different path less traveled to become a teacher, I desire to inspire my students to take that path in learning to unlock their potential. Taking a different path for me has made all the difference in my teaching career.

TK: I know you enjoy meaningful quotes. Can you share your favorite quote and why it's your favorite?

Manuel: A great activist, Fredrick Douglass, once said, "If there is no struggle, there is no progress." This quote has always been one of my favorites because it inspires me to rise above my challenges and use my personal faith to see that there is always hope even in bleak times. I truly enjoy quotes because they are small tools that can inspire individuals.

My daily class farewell quote to students at Booker T. Washington [known as "The Hive"]: A first impression can be a lasting impression, so make the impression you want someone to see of you at the Hive today. Have a great day.

TK: How do you approach your job on difficult days?

Manuel: When those light bulbs of learning come on for all children, it inspires me because it allows me to know that I have developed a method that has contributed to that child's intellectual growth. For example, I had a student in one of my early years of teaching repeat the seventh grade. This student told me he did not want to take reading, and, in fact, he hated me for trying to make him do something he proclaimed to already know. I told him that I understood, but he still needed to come to class daily with his materials ready to learn. I informed him that I wanted to have fun and help him get out of a class that he did not need on his schedule. This student's Lexile Reading score was a 220, which indicated he was almost five years below his grade level. This student still did everything he could to do the opposite of what I instructed him. He showed up late and refused to do classwork; nevertheless, I had high expectations, so once he saw I was not lowering my expectations, he actively participated and enjoyed it. Then one day the counselor came to get him so he could take his SRI Reading Exam to see if his Lexile score had increased. The student said, "Mrs. Manuel, I am going to reach my goal." About an hour later, the same student who dreaded coming to class raced around the corner telling me he had achieved a score of a 600. His score indicated that he grew three grade levels.

[That challenge and others like it] are what keep me returning to teaching on a daily basis. I tell them that no matter how hard school seems, that I will never give up on them. Many students started upholding the daily 3 Ds of desire, discipline and dedication when they saw their growth. The students began to believe they could achieve, especially when the principal showed up to the classroom to inform them that we have made one of the highest reading growths in the school.

TK: Congratulations on being nominated for 2023 Oklahoma Teacher of the Year! Can you share what you think contributed to your nomination?

Manuel: Being in the teaching profession has always helped me to understand my goal is to be a life-long learner who builds and serves my students, colleagues and the school community. My job never ends at 3:35 p.m. I have always had an after-school club meeting, tutoring, planning for a school event, assisting seniors with college admissions, partnering with community organizations for service-learning opportunities, coaching and guiding new teachers in classroom management or curriculum needs, meeting with parents or athletic concessions.

I believe that the only way to unlock the doors for my kids is by first showing them that I am a dedicated servant to them and the schools I have called home over the years. Kids commonly ask me if I ever go home. I laugh, but I make sure that they have every need met before I dart out the door. If I cannot reach a parent, it is not uncommon for me to do a home visit or show up to their church/community events in love and support.

I show my students that in order to win, they must work hard by setting and achieving their daily and yearly goals. My dedication of service has always extended beyond the four walls of the classroom, and this is why I believe I was nominated for teacher of the year.

TK: What advice would you give to students thinking about pursuing a career in teaching?

Manuel: Young people who are thinking about pursuing a career in teaching make my heart happy because they clearly have a passion to help give back to the next generation. I believe it is the most rewarding profession offered to mankind. Being an effective teacher is a calling, and an individual must possess desire, discipline and dedication to be prepared for the daily classroom. It is important for one to be their best because we work with delicate minds that are still in the developmental process.

Also, one should keep in mind that an impactful teacher cannot just be strong in their content mastery but must be skilled in multiple areas. These areas [include] effectiveness in communication, conflict resolution, relationship building, loving and accepting all children, being a team player, detailed planning, organizational skills, [knowing how to be an] emotional stabilizer and classroom management, just to name a few.

One who has the above skill-sets will be a success as a teacher because they will one day have successors who walk in their footsteps as a teacher to either one day teach or will give back to the causes in education.

TK: When you're not working, what do you and your family like to do around Tulsa?

Manuel: My husband, Brad, our two kiddos, Noah (11), Nilsen (4) and I love being outside attending events on Greenwood, Tulsa Arts District, Tulsa Zoo, FC Tulsa games and Guthrie Green. On weekends, we love to watch movies at AMC/Cinema 8, be active with our church family, see shows at the PAC, hang out at Barnes & Noble and participate in taekwondo events. Of course, one of our favorites is following the TulsaKids calendar to see all the weekend events, especially at the Tulsa City-County Libraries.

Some of our favorite parks, where the entire family plays on the playground and swings, are Owen, Whiteside and BS Roberts.

At home, the family loves roasting marshmallows, playing frisbee and downtime together.

TK: Wrap-up! Anything else you'd like to share?

Manuel: I am excited about some events I have planned in 2023 to celebrate everyday teachers in the classroom and want this event to encourage novice teachers around the City of Tulsa who are making a difference in the lives of students. If you are interested in learning more, including how you can help support these efforts, please contact me at manuetr@tulsachools.org. TK

Mrs. Manuel speaks honestly about having a son with special needs and shares her perspective on how this has helped her in life and in the classroom on the Sharing Passion and Purpose Podcast. Listen on your favorite app or directly at sharingpassionandpurpose.com.

Nancy A. Moore is a Public Relations Coordinator at Montereau, Adjunct Professor at Tulsa Community College, and has been writing for TulsaKids for almost 20 years.

Re-thinking Family Dinners for the New Year

By **Natalie Mikles**





CANDICE BELL/GETTY

QUICK AND EASY — it's one of the most popular recipe categories. Everyone from Ina Garten to Jacques Pépin has a cookbook on the subject.

Most of us are looking for ways to cut down on our time spent in the kitchen. Even those of us who love to cook need recipes that can be made in minutes. We need recipes that can be made in the 30 minutes we have between getting home from work and driving to soccer practice or the time between helping with homework and putting the baby down for the night.

For my family, I look for recipes I can make in the time it would take me to run through a drive-thru. Since we spend so much time in our car, it's all too tempting to order dinner through a drive-thru window rather than go home to an hour of cooking and dirty dishes. When my pantry is full of food that can be turned into a quick dinner, it's much easier to pass on the temptation of fast food.

January is a good time to rethink family dinners. It's time to assess what works and what doesn't, and what we need to restock in the pantry or store in the freezer to make dinnertime easy and delicious. Is that asking too much? No! As parents, we're the captains of our ship, and it's up to us to find solutions to keep things ship shape and to enjoy life (even in the kitchen) along the way.

Add these ingredients to your shopping list for the week, so you'll have everything you need for a dinner you can throw together in minutes. Add rotisserie chicken if you like. Buy your carrots pre-shredded to make it easy.

SESAME PEANUT NOODLES

SERVES 4

- 8 ounces linguine
- 1 cup red wine vinaigrette salad dressing
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon sriracha
- ½ cup red bell pepper, cut in thin strips
- ½ cup pre-shredded carrots
- 2 scallions, chopped

1. Bring large pot of water to a boil over high heat. Break linguine in half and add to the pot. Reduce heat to medium-high and cook, 7-8 minutes.
2. Whisk together the vinaigrette, peanut butter, sesame oil, soy sauce and sriracha until smooth. Set aside.
3. Drain linguine. Add to large serving bowl. Pour dressing over pasta, stirring to combine. Add bell pepper, carrots and scallions. Stir until all ingredients are coated. Serve immediately or cover and store in refrigerator to serve later as a cold salad.

This one may not appeal to picky eaters. But adventurous little kids and teens will love the flavors in this pasta dish. Stock up on a few packages of tortellini and keep them in the freezer for busy nights. Just add a few extra minutes of cooking time if frozen. If you don't have any basil, use a teaspoon of pesto from a store-bought jar if you have some in the refrigerator.

CHEESE TORTELLINI WITH TOMATO AND ARTICHOKE

SERVES 4

- 1 (9-ounce) package refrigerated cheese tortellini
- 1 (6-ounce) jar marinated artichoke hearts
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil
- 1 pint grape or cherry tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon capers, drained
- ¼ cup parmesan cheese

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil over high heat. Add tortellini, cooking over medium-high heat, about 5-6 minutes.
2. Place artichoke hearts, basil and tomatoes in a food processor. Pulses 10 times. Stir in capers.
3. Drain tortellini. Add to large serving bowl. Pour tomato mixture on top. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese.



Canned soup can be a quick dinner when you're short on time or money. It's a good way to stretch dinner until you can get to the grocery store. Add a grilled cheese sandwich if you have a few extra minutes. Here are some ways to doctor a canned soup to punch it up a bit.

CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

Add a handful of baby spinach to hot chicken noodle soup. Drizzle a little extra-virgin olive oil and parmesan cheese.

Mix a small can of corn into the soup. Kids who like corn will love it.

TOMATO SOUP

Drizzle heavy cream to add richness to plain tomato soup. Sprinkle with fresh basil before serving.

Stir in pesto and croutons to add flavor and texture.

TORTILLA SOUP

It may be obvious, but adding crushed tortilla chips and grated cheese to canned tortilla soup definitely takes it up a notch.

Make it fresh by topping with chopped avocado, cilantro or bell peppers.

This fried rice serves two but can easily be doubled. Make it speedier by using pre-chopped veggies from the grocery store.

PORK FRIED RICE

SERVES 2

- 1 boneless pork loin chop (6 ounces), cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- ¼ cup finely chopped carrot
- ¼ cup chopped fresh broccoli
- ¼ cup frozen peas
- 1 green onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 1 cup cold cooked rice
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- ⅛ teaspoon garlic powder
- ⅛ teaspoon ground ginger

1. In a large skillet, sauté the pork, carrot, broccoli, peas and onion in butter over medium-high heat until pork is no longer pink, 3-5 minutes. Remove from skillet and set aside.
2. In same skillet, cook and stir egg over medium heat until completely cooked. Stir in the rice, soy sauce, garlic powder, ginger and pork mixture.

You can make this heartier by putting the rice and bean mixture in tortillas, sprinkling with grated cheese and avocado. Starting with microwaveable bags of ready rice saves times when you have none to spare.

ONE-DISH MEXICAN BLACK BEANS AND RICE

SERVES 4

- 2 (8.8-ounce) pouches ready-to-serve Spanish-style rice
- 2 (15-ounce) cans black beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 (4-ounce) cans chopped green chiles
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1. Prepare rice according to package directions.
2. Combine black beans and green chiles in a microwave-safe bowl, and microwave on high for 2 minutes. Stir in rice and cilantro. Serve immediately with your favorite toppings. TK

Natalie Mikles is a mom of three. She writes about food, sharing recipes for busy families and picky eaters.





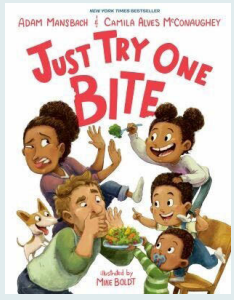
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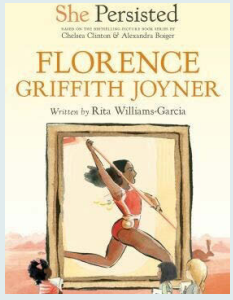
Focus on First Name Letters for Print Knowledge This Month

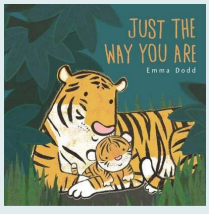


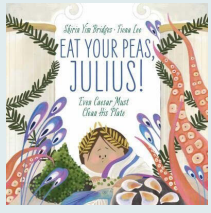
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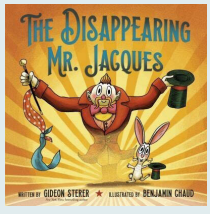
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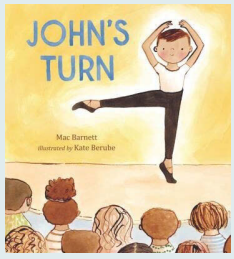














LEARNING HOW TO read is as complex (and at times as frustrating) as learning how to drive a stick-shift — in the snow — on a hill.

As parents and caregivers, you can start giving your children some of the tools that will help make that learning process smoother when it's time to tackle the learning-how-to-read beast. Think of it as helping *your* future self help your *child's* future self.

Simply reading, talking, singing, writing and playing every day is the best thing you can do to activate the necessary knowledge and skills that your future first grader will need.

But within those activities, there are other easy and fun ways to make sure young children are fueling the engine that will make reading success easier for them when it's time to start driving that stick-shift.

One of my favorites is to find, read and explore books that feature the letter of your child's first name. (Not sure how to do this? Ask a friendly librarian how to use limiters in the library's catalog at tccl.bibliocommons.com)

The official reading-education name for this skill is "Print Knowledge" and "Print Awareness." It usually starts with the A-B-C song but can also involve isolating and learning individual letters one at a time.

Because children (well, and all humans) are largely preoccupied with themselves, starting this print knowledge journey is best by focusing on their own names. Once they can identify the first letter of their first name in various print sources — including restaurant signs and billboards — you can expand the letter search to other letters in their name.

In honor of January, let's look at some great "J" books that might stimulate the interest of children with "J" names. (We're looking at you, Jayla, Jasmine, Javon and Jaxon)

BONUS TIP: After you have read the book through several times, you might want to just look at each page together and point out — or have your child point out — all of the capital Js. This is also a great introduction to *writing* the letter, whether in crayon, paints or even shaving cream on a table or cookie sheet.

Eat Your Peas, Julius!: Even Caesar Must Clean His Plate written by Shirin Yim Bridges and illustrated by Fiona Lee. Mix some history with whimsy and a focus on food with this "J" Julius (Julius Caesar, Roman emperor, that is) book. Boiled camel feet…yum?

Jo Bright and the Seven Bots written by Deborah Underwood and illustrated by Meg Hunt. In this updated version of the classic Snow White and the Seven Dwarves story, futuristic Jo is aces at making bots and thwarting the angry queen with the help of her friendly dragon!

Just the Way You Are written and illustrated by Emma Dodd. Unconditional love is a beautiful thing — whether it's from a human or tiger parent!

Florence Griffith Joyner written by Rita Williams-Garcia and illustrated by Gillian Flint. Teach your child more about real-life athlete "Flo-Jo" and the challenges she overcame to achieve a number of world records in track and field.

The Disappearing Mr. Jacques written by Gideon Sterer and illustrated by Benjamin Chaud. In what can only be termed "trippy," this clever book features a magician who appears, disappears and re-appears in fun and surprising ways.

John's Turn written by Mac Barnett and illustrated by Kate Berube. It takes a lot of courage to show off a new skill to other kids in a talent show — and even more so if you are John and want to share ballet moves. A lovely exploration of both dance and celebrating differences.

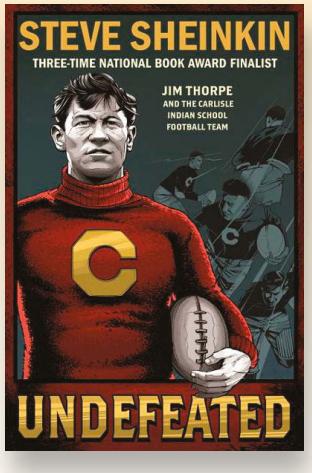
Just Try One Bite written by Adam Mansbach and Camila Alves McConaughey and illustrated by Mike Boldt. A humorous turn-about where children must convince their parents to try healthy food choices. TK

Mr. Henry's Books
EDUCATOR WORKSHOP

Saturday, Feb. 18 • 9-11 a.m.

Central Library • Fifth Street and Denver Avenue
Pocahontas Greadington Learning and Creativity Center

Attention, middle- and high-school teachers and librarians! You are invited to this continuing-education workshop focusing on the works of author Steve Sheinkin, winner of the 2023 Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers' Literature. **You will:**



- Receive 50 copies of *Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team* by Steve Sheinkin for your students to keep as their own.
- Learn how to incorporate various elements of *Undefeated* into your classroom and receive lesson plans on how to use Sheinkin's works in a variety of school subjects.
- Be introduced to Tulsa City-County Library's Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers' Literature.
- Gain an opportunity to win a classroom visit by Steve Sheinkin on Friday, May 5.

Every participant will receive their copies of *Undefeated* **after** the workshop, as well as an official continuing-education certificate. Participants must be employed by a school district within Tulsa County.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

www.tulsalibrary.org/mr-henrys-books-registration

Registration Deadline: Friday, Feb. 10

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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Montessori and Reggio Emilia: CHILD-CENTERED LEARNING



This little guy is watering a plant learning how to "take care" of the things around him.
PHOTO COURTESY: LAKE HILLS MONTESSORI

Whitman says a Montessori early childhood education creates independent, self-solving people who are kind and courteous to the people around them.

Cover Feature
By Mikaela LeBlanc

In a Montessori classroom, you'll see children pouring and tonging, peeling potatoes, chopping and slicing with knives, sewing and table scrubbing — practical tasks you do in life.

Jodie Whitman is the director of Lake Hills Montessori School in Tulsa, an early childhood program for children ages 18 months to 6 years.

She says this practical real-life education teaches children responsibility and helps them to read.

By moving left to right and top to bottom, the activities reinforce the reading coordinates even before children start reading.

"When you're doing all these different things, it's the hand and eye coordination that you're developing," Whitman says, "And when you're doing the tonging or the pinching skills, like for dropping water droplets on top of a specific point, that's building up that pincer grip, which is a prerequisite for writing. You have to have a strong pincer grip in order to hold a pencil or pen."

Whitman's sister, Sandy Karnstadt, is the Head of Schools and Founder of the two Lake Hills Montessori campuses in Texas.

She says these activities also develop the student's concentration and completion of a task. Then, they put the materials away in consideration for the next child who uses it.

"You can't just leave a knife. You have to go put it where it belongs, so nobody gets hurt," Whitman says.

That care for others is also part of the social graces curriculum in the Montessori model.

"We give them the mindset that it's your responsibility to take care of yourself and your surroundings and others, and if you have a conflict with someone, you need to resolve that," Whitman says. "You're a peacemaker versus going to tattle-tale to the teacher."

That practical, tangible method is also used with academics.

Whitman says the Montessori materials lay a foundation of knowledge that stays with students.

"Your hands are the tool way to your long-term memory," she says. "So, when you're manipulating concrete things with your hands – like you can hold 1,000 beads versus 10 beads – you feel the difference and you remember that. You remember which one is larger just because you've experienced it."

Another example is what Montessori refers to as the physical alphabet — wooden, movable letters.

"[Children will] spell words and eventually make sentences, which continues into journaling, all before 6 years old," Whitman says. "And when they're using these letters, the consonants are painted red, and the vowels are painted blue."

The children unconsciously pick up the difference, so when they are ready to learn the vowels and consonants, they already know them from manipulating the red and blue letters in their early years.

Karnstadt says the Montessori method teaches writing before teaching reading.

"We believe that coding is more important," Karnstadt says. "You have to be able to code before you can decode. Writing is the code, and reading is the decode. So, we teach the children how to represent the sound with the physical alphabet, which leads to writing."

The benefit of Montessori, Karnstadt says, is that students are confident and capable of their own learning.

"The confidence stays forever," she says. "If you think you're smart, you're going to continue to try to be smart and believe that you can figure out a problem, and they become the leaders."

Whitman says a Montessori early childhood education creates independent, self-solving people who are kind and courteous to the people around them.

Tips for parents for their child's early childhood education

Whitman says it important to let kids struggle and fail.

"When a mom quickly puts on a kid's shoes so they can get out the door, if you would just allow them to do it themselves, struggle, maybe even get on the wrong foot, it's OK," she says. "Celebrate the independence."

In searching for an early childhood education program, Bates says to look for an atmosphere where respect for children and childhood is evident; a philosophy of education that involves choice and problem-solving for children; experiences that cultivate and value both the cognitive and creative intelligences; a balance of indoor and outdoor and large and small group experiences; time and space for children to explore and cultivate their curiosities and a place that is responsive to children's needs and nurtures positive social-emotional growth.

Older children are given opportunities to demonstrate that confidence and kindness by helping to teach the younger children what they know.

At Lake Hills Montessori, Whitman says, the kindergartners are leaders and admired by the younger children.

"They have more freedom," she says, "They also are helpers in the morning. They can volunteer. They get to wear little vests and help the children arrive to school. They'll help them out of their cars. They'll walk them to class. They'll carry their bags."

How does Montessori stand out?

"The biggest thing I think is traditional settings create followers," Whitman says. "And a Montessori or Waldorf or Reggio Emilia, I think, create free thinkers. They think outside the box. They're not stuck with what they're told to do and what the correct answer is. They're willing to explore to find their own conclusions, which creates new things."

Where did Montessori and Reggio Emilia Begin?

The Montessori method was founded by Dr. Maria Montessori, the first female doctor in Italy. She opened a school for poor, disadvantaged and previously unschooled children in Rome.

Whitman says traditional education teaches by rote memory and timed quizzes. Montessori teaches through experience.

Like the Montessori philosophy, Reggio Emilia is an experience-based teaching method.

Jerry Bates is the Head of School at Riverfield Country Day School in Tulsa, which uses the Reggio Emilia approach to educating students from infancy through high school.

"Maria Montessori and Loris Malaguzzi, the founders of both approaches, knew each other," Bates said. "Reggio Emelia — the approach — was founded in the same town, actually, with funding from the sale of a tank that was left there during World War II."

Malaguzzi was a psychologist. In addition to the two founders' backgrounds in science and their Italian roots, Bates and Whitman say there are similarities between the two methods.

"I think the similarities come with some of the materials that are used," Bates says, "although Montessori materials are very structured, whereas in the Reggio approach, the materials tend to be open-ended."

Independent vs. Collaborative Learning

He says with the Montessori method the children are often learning independently. The Reggio approach is more collaborative — teaching students how to work within a group or within teams.

"The creative elements of this type of work and the experiences that they have, the experiential learning really creates a love of learning that benefits them throughout their life," Bates says. "They maintain their curiosity as long as they possibly can – and their creativity."



Toddlers at Riverfield explore natural objects.
PHOTO COURTESY RIVERFIELD COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

"They're both led by the independent child, meaning it's not one lesson for the group. Each individual child has their own lesson plan. If they were in a public school, it would be considered an I.E.P. — an independent education plan," Whitman says. "It's where all these people are focused on you, what your abilities are and what you need."

Another difference between the two methods, she says, is that the Montessori method pushes big academic concepts before the age of 6. Children begin reading after age 4 ½ and age 5.

A Hundred Languages

With the Reggio approach, Bates says academic content is embedded in the project work students are doing. Children learn to read up through the second grade and by the third grade, they are refining their skills and reading to learn.

The foundation of Reggio Emilia is that there are three protagonists working to develop a student's learning: the child, the teacher and the parents.

At Riverfield Country Day School, the early education program starts at 8 or 9 weeks old. The infants' room at Riverfield, Bates says, looks different from many traditional infant rooms.

"You'll see a lot of sewing materials, writing materials, what you would typically call art supplies," he says. "But you may also see some coding things, some electronic things, some wire, a lot of clay, different things that students can manipulate to show us what they're thinking about."

A fish tank in the infants' room is another material that mesmerized the infants who crawled to it to look inside.

Bates says that one day he found his own infant daughter staring into the fish tank.

Even though she couldn't articulate it, "I knew connections were being made," he said.

Bates says another element of the Reggio Emilia approach is the Hundred Languages of children.

"A hundred languages is a metaphor for some of the materials that are used for students to use to express their knowledge or express what they've learned," he says. "Oftentimes, that will be translated into an art project to submit an experience and so, by doing the active work, the creative work, they're cementing their learning."

One such example is a trip a group of students made to Tulsa's landmarks.

"They did art projects based on using multiple languages," he says. "Some were done with fabric and beads. Some were painting on wood, and it became an art installation that was really all about Tulsa."

The students then curated an exhibit for their parents to see.

That experience also exemplifies the third teacher in the Reggio Emilia approach — the environment — which includes the spaces in the classroom.

And creativity is as much a part of learning the alphabet as writing it is.

"They also learn how to lay it out, using products from the woods that they picked up from a hike and other things," he said.

The Reggio Emilia approach uses project-based learning, which Bates says helps keep students engaged in learning.

"You try to build on kind of prior knowledge," he says. "You may start with one theory and students are looking at it, and you may think the students want to go in one direction and then, all of a sudden, in talking with them, they want to explore something else and learn about something else. If it fits in that area and what you're looking at, you can move in that direction and kind of all learn together."

Like Montessori, real-life experiences are part of the learning in the Reggio Emilia method.

"I have a note from one of our 3- to 5-year-old classrooms on my desk that is asking me to come meet with them because they need to take a picture and interview me for something that they're learning about with school," Bates said.

The students wrote the note and delivered it to Bates, and they scheduled a time for him to meet with the class. He says the experience taught them skill development in reading, writing and communication in a way that was fun and engaging for them.

Both Whitman and Bates say the benefits of their respective approaches are the critical thinking skills and confidence their students develop.

"They look for their own answers versus waiting and finding somebody to help them," Whitman says. "It really changes the directional path of the way they approach knowledge. It creates lifelong learners."

"The creative elements of this type of work and the experiences that they have, the experiential learning really creates a love of learning that benefits them throughout their life," Bates says. "They maintain their curiosity as long as they possibly can – and their creativity."

Bates says collaborative learning is how education was meant to be, and it's the direction public schools are taking with their STEM and STEAM programs.

"It's to give students ways to attempt things, potentially fail, but fail at a smaller risk than they have before and learn from their mistakes, and then try to get it right," he says. "It's a scientific approach to education."

At the end of the day, Bates says, it's the students who own their learning for their lifetimes. TK

EDUCATION

Choosing a School to Fit Your Child

Beyond comparing standardized test scores and asking friends and neighbors about schools, how do you decide where to send your child to school? Start with your family and your child. Think about tuition, transportation, your values and how you discipline as well as your child's strengths and weaknesses, temperament and personality. An anxious or easily distracted child may need a small classroom with plenty of one-on-one attention. A child who enjoys group work or creative endeavors may feel restricted in a highly academic, very structured environment.

Also consider your child's developmental level. For example, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) recommends that in classrooms for children from birth through age 8, technology and interactive media "should not replace other beneficial educational activities such as creative play, outdoor experiences, and social interactions with peers and adults…" (naeyc.org).

If your child is going into middle school, find out how emotional problems are handled and what support systems are in place for students who are struggling. How are those support systems communicated to students? Will your child know where to go for help, if needed?

If you are considering a transfer from one public school to another, magnet schools, charter schools or private schools, research the deadlines for filling out and filing information, signing up for testing or taking tours.

Gather Basic Information

You should be able to find basic information from school websites. Consider the following:

- tuition
- class size
- student/teacher ratio
- application and testing deadlines
- religious or secular
- location/transportation
- racial/cultural mix
- special programs such as language immersion, IB, Schools Attuned or programs for special needs
- safety measures and protocol

Once you have gathered some basic information, you may be able to eliminate certain schools based on your initial research.

School Visits

Visit the schools you are considering. Besides talking with teachers and administrators, observe the environment of the school. Is there mutual respect between students and teachers? Note the behavior in hallways and the cafeteria.

Elementary, middle and high school students should have opportunities for doing hands-on learning, making oral presentations, having class discussions, asking questions and expressing opinions. Students should be taught about internet safety and how to recognize reliable sources of information.

Questions to Ask

Preschool

- What is the educational level and training of the staff?
- Is it licensed?
- How long has the staff been at the school?
- What is a typical day like? Do children have free play and outdoor play?
- Teacher/child ratio?
- Is the facility maintained (inside and out)?
- How is discipline handled?

Elementary, Middle and High School

- Does the school support your child's interests and talents?
- How will the school build up your child's weak areas?
- Does the school offer strong academics and also athletics and arts?
- How much writing do students do? What kind of writing is expected of them?
- How much time do students spend on screens?
- What is the school philosophy? Is it accredited? By whom?
- How is discipline handled? What is the policy for cyberbullying?
- What is the policy for students' cell phone use?
- Are there opportunities for students to learn negotiation and conflict resolution skills?
- What support systems are there for students having problems?
- What opportunities are there for helping others?
- How are learning differences and different learning styles handled?
- Are there opportunities for group work?
- Are most assignments individual or group?
- What kinds of hands-on assignments do students do?
- How does the school address social and emotional issues?
- What is the homework policy?
- How are teachers available to students?
- Does the school have a diverse student body?
- What are the school's biggest assets? Greatest challenges?
- How does the school communicate with parents?
- How are parents involved in the school?
- Are there opportunities for parents to communicate with one another?
- What do most students do after graduating high school?
- Can you see your child succeeding in this school? TK

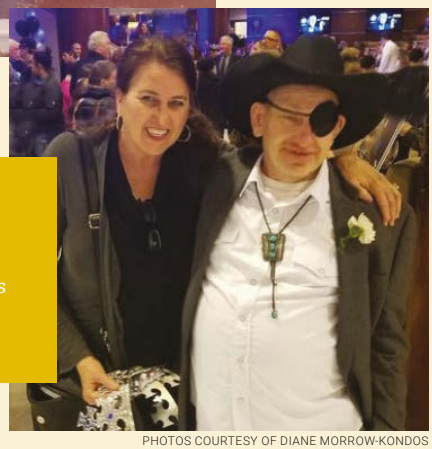
This article was updated from the TulsaKids article "Beyond the Basics: Questions You Should Ask When Choosing a School." tulsakids.com/beyond-the-basics-questions-you-should-ask-when-choosing-a-school/

Tulsa Writer's Memoir Is a Poignant Portrait of Being a "Glass Child"

By **Betty Casey**







PHOTOS COURTESY OF DIANE MORROW-KONDOS

DISCUSSION AND BOOK SIGNING AT MAGIC CITY BOOKS

The Long Road to Happy by Diane Morrow-Kondos

221 E. Archer Street, Thurs., Jan. 26, 7 p.m.

I LOVE MY *brother. As a child, however, that love did not always keep me from wanting to be like everyone else, to fit in, to be an ordinary girl with an ordinary little brother and an ordinary family.*

For many years, our family had been just that.

And then one day, we weren't anymore.

(Excerpt from *The Long Road to Happy: A Sister's Journey Through Her Brother's Disabilities* by Diane Morrow-Kondos)

Diane Morrow-Kondos's memoir, *The Long Road to Happy* (The RoadRunner Press, 2023) is an honest, clear-eyed expression of the complicated emotions involved in being the sibling of a brother with severe intellectual disabilities. Guilt, shame, fear, isolation, boredom, confusion and loneliness shaped Diane's young life, but equally present were protectiveness, happiness, playfulness, pride and love.

Morrow-Kondos's memoir divides a time before her brother and an entirely different time after David was born when she was 5 years-old. While David looked "normal," his development during the first year was not. Their mother knew but was brushed off by the doctor until it became apparent that David was not progressing. At around his third birrthday, David was diagnosed as "mentally retarded," the name of the diagnosis in 1966.

"Any time there is a child in the family that requires an extra share of resources, it changes the family dynamics," Morrow-Kondos said. "My brother needed more attention, more time. His needs became the central focus of our family."

Being the closest in age to her brother, Morrow-Kondos was the sibling who spent the most time with David. He was mostly non-verbal, but she spent hours trying to understand him. She took him with her when she went swimming, bike riding or to the park with friends, and later, on some of her dates.

There were times that she struggled with math in school and wondered if she, too, might be "retarded."

Confused and longing for attention, she desperately tried to figure out how to be the perfect sister to David, seeing it as a way to get her parents to see her. She admits to feeling some resentment toward her parents, especially her mother.

As she explains in the book, "glass children" is a term applied to siblings of children with disabilities. Often, the non-disabled child is invisible, as if they are a pane of glass, unseen by parents who are focused on the child with the most need.

At the time, few people talked about intellectual disabilities. Even today, people often don't want to talk about the difficulties. They may be in denial about what will happen to their child.

"This book could really help parents of kids with disabilities understand what the siblings are going through," she said. "Siblings will understand some of the feelings that I went through. Everything doesn't have to be positive. It's OK to have negative feelings. I hid those and was ashamed, but I've found that my feelings are pretty normal and typical."

It's also a book that she hopes will help those who have never had her experience better understand families who have a child with an intellectual disability.

Morrow-Kondos, who is now David's guardian, wants to encourage people to become more honest and open about sharing their feelings, both good and bad. She thinks that it's especially important to pay attention to the siblings.

"It's the siblings that have the longest-lasting relationship with the person with disabilities," she said. TK

Editor's Note: Diane Morrow-Kondos writes TulsaKids' grandparents' blog.

Betty Casey is the Associate Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of TulsaKids Magazine. She has been with TulsaKids for over 20 years.



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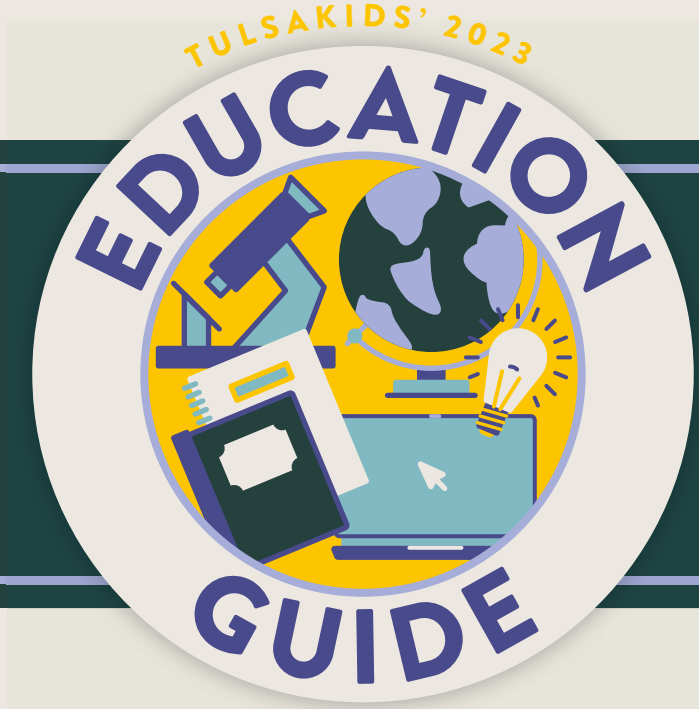
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Metro's secondary school offers a range of academic programs including 15 Advanced Placement courses and eight courses for concurrent college credit. Metro offers activities for students of all ages including 11 varsity sports, debate, leadership, missions and fine arts classes like studio art, drama, band and choir.

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Contact: Denise Jurbala, Director of Admissions

8906 E. 34th St., Tulsa

918.296.3113, ext. 111

djurbala@tandcschool.org

Tandcschool.org

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Contact: Debra Price, Director

326 S. College Ave., Tulsa

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debra-price@utulsa.edu

uschool.utulsa.edu

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.

VICTORY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Contact: Jennifer Miller, Superintendent

7700 S. Lewis Ave., Tulsa

918.491.7720

vcstulsa.org

Victory Christian School is a fully accredited K3–12th grade school dedicated to rigorous instruction presented with a Biblical worldview. VCS serves families from Tulsa and surrounding communities on our campus at 7700 S. Lewis Ave.

VCS has experienced record growth, enrolling over 750 NEW students in the last two years. As a result, we have expanded into a new Kindergarten Wing and have added a state-of-the-art STEM lab. We have also announced plans to build a new indoor athletic facility and purchase land for future growth.

Our focus on excellent academics has resulted in eight National Merit scholars and over $21.5 million awarded to VCS graduates in the last five years.

With athletic training beginning at the elementary level, our student athletes develop Christian character, leadership traits, and a championship mindset leading to district, regional and state titles at all levels. Our volleyball team has won the last five consecutive STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS in both 4A and 5A. Our High School has also sent Football, Basketball, Baseball, Soccer, Track, Golf and Tennis to the state playoffs in the past year.

Our VCS Studio Arts have received numerous local, state, and national awards. We've recently been recognized in the top 1% of all art programs in the United States.

Let us give you a personal tour!
Visit vcstulsa.org/open-house today!

Contact Jan Thomas in Admissions at jthomas@victory.com or call 918.491.7763.

WRIGHT CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

11391 E. Admiral Place, Tulsa

918.438.0922

info@wrightchristianacademy.com

wrightchristianacademy.com

For over three decades, Wright Christian Academy has been serving families in the Tulsa area by offering an exceptional education to children from grades PK3 to 12th. An education that stands solidly on the Word of God and teaches from a Christian world view, to partner with parents in combating the confusions of our time.

We believe nothing is more important than a person, and nothing is more important for a person than to know and love God. We partner with parents to this end. In a recent survey, 100% of our parents feel their child is valued and cared for by their teachers at Wright Christian Academy. Loving and caring for our children while equipping them academically is what we are all about.

Academically, we offer over thirty hours of college credit, and last year attained an average ACT score of 29 within our college preparatory program. Joy is a mark of our ministry, where the parents describe us as "more than a school."

BOSTON AVENUE WEEKDAY SCHOOL

1301 S. Boston Ave., Tulsa

918.699.0112

preschool@bostonavenue.org

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

918.488.8991

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

918.746.2604

mwelsh@casciahall.com

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.

CHRISTIAN MONTESSORI ACADEMY

Contact: RoseMarie Mann, Director; Laura Chisholm, Associate Director

3702 S. 90th E. Ave., Tulsa

918.628.6524 | christianmontessoriacademy.org

CMA's community-oriented, multi-age classrooms invite learning in an enticing, stress-free environment. 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 understanding who God made them to be and what His intention for them in the world is. The world wants our education to be about knowledge. God wants it to be about wisdom. 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!

DISCOVERY LAB

3123 S. Riverside Dr., Tulsa

918.295.8144 | discoverylab.org

reservations@discoverylab.org

Discover more at Discovery Lab!

Discovery Lab is where best practices in informal learning meet fun and, whether you are a student, teacher, or parent/caregiver there is always something to discover!

- Camps are offered throughout the year to engage, educate, and inspire children through hands-on STEAM activities.
- Our extensive catalog of STEAM and health and wellness educational programs can be delivered in conjunction with a field trip to the museum or on-site at your school.
- Outreach classes, series programs, science demonstrations, and assembly programs bring a unique experience to your classroom, after-school program, or scouting group.
- Select offerings can be adapted to be delivered virtually in your classroom or at home using supply kits.

Meaningful play is the gateway to inspiring a love of learning at Discovery Lab every day. When children drive their own learning experience, it creates "sticky" memories—experiences that children will remember long after their visit. Explore Discovery Lab's camps, classes, field trips, and outreach to find an experience to spark any child's curiosity for learning.

For more information about museum classes, camps, outreach or distance learning programs, contact Program Sales at 918.295.8144 ext. 2509 or reservations@discoverylab.org.



MARQUETTE SCHOOL

Over **100 Years** of Academic Excellence

SCHEDULE A TOUR!

marquetteschool.org

- Diocesan Catholic school
- Pre-K - Grade 8
- Whole-child educational approach

FAITH • KNOWLEDGE • CHARACTER



MingoValley CHRISTIAN

PreK-12th grade | mingovalley.org



Stewart Little Day School is a small, nature-based preschool for children ages 2 through 5. We focus on learning and development through outdoor play and home experiences.

NOW ENROLLING!

StewartLittleDaySchool@gmail.com

419-571-8787 • StewartLittleDaySchool.com

PARENT TOT CLASS BEGINS AT 4 MONTHS



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millerswimschool.com | 918-254-1988

Miller swim school

EARLY LEARNING CENTER AT CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Contact: Lynn Coye

3515 S. Harvard, Tulsa

918.743.7673

cumctulsa.com

The Early Learning Center is a 3 day/week program. We meet Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Our "Three and Me" program focuses on the young child aged 3 months–3 years. We are a Christ-centered preschool with Bible stories, music, art and movement each day. Our teachers are experienced in early childhood and are sensitive to the uniqueness of each child.

Daily instruction coupled with a focus on play makes for a great day for your child. We genuinely love what we do!

HAPPY CAMPERS ACADEMY

Happy Campers Academy — Cherry Street
1819 E. 15th St., Tulsa | 918.584.2779
hcatulsa@gmail.com

Happy Campers at Temple Israel
2004 E. 22nd Pl., Tulsa | 918.747.3122
happycamperstempleisrael@gmail.com

Happy Campers at John Knox
(This location has school-age
after care and summer camp)
2929 E. 31st St., Tulsa | 918.742.7656
happycampersjohnknox@gmail.com

happycampersacademy.com

Happy Campers Academy offers Tulsa and surrounding communities quality childcare. We accept children ages 6 weeks to pre-kindergarten. 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

918.481.1111

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

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 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.–4:00 p.m. Follow us on Instagram or Facebook!

LEGACY ALLIANCE

Contact: Michelle Stansell

5434 E. 91st St., Tulsa

918.960.0622

legacyallianceok.com

legacyallianceok@gmail.com

Legacy Alliance is a unique hybrid homeschool program that partners with parents to encourage, equip and empower their students to boldly launch into a broken world to glorify Christ. We meet 2–3 days per week for classroom instruction.

As part of the alliance with families, our qualified teachers invest heavily in their students to help them grow in Christlike character, as well as succeed academically. Through a focus on four key values — Learn, Love, Lead, Launch — we desire to provide a loving community where students are able to develop leadership skills, along with intellectual achievements.

All of the above aids in preparing them to serve and succeed as they go on to careers, post-secondary education and/or ministry positions.

MARQUETTE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

1519 S. Quincy, Tulsa

918.584.4631

marquetteschool.com

At Marquette Catholic School, we have been educating the next generation for more than 100 years. Offering pre-K3–eighth grade, Marquette is a place and community that first and foremost belongs to Jesus Christ. We form students with care, intentionality, and excellence, and then send them out into the world to transform it.

In our Early Childhood Development Center, three- and four-year-olds are immersed in a rich curriculum that prioritizes their physical and emotional needs in classrooms custom-made for their needs. In kindergarten through eighth grade, our teachers focus on developing well-rounded, happy and faith-filled students through our whole-child approach.

Our rigorous academic curriculum upholds the Catholic tradition as our faith animates every aspect of our school. The Sacraments, prayer and liturgy are not afterthoughts, but the source and summit of our existence. With an enrollment of approximately 500 (pre-K–8), our students possess great character and virtue, and are academically prepared for high school.

The best way to experience our community is to see it for yourself. Schedule a private tour today!

MILLER SWIM SCHOOL

TULSA: 6415 S. Mingo Rd., Tulsa

JENKS: 525 W. 91st St. S., Tulsa

OWASSO: 10001 N. 127th E Ave., Owasso

918.254.1988

millerswimschool.com

Miller Swim School has been in the unique business of teaching swimming for over 60 years. At Miller, our mission is to build a safer community, one family at a time, through swim lessons, water safety education and drowning prevention.

Swimming lessons are one of the best activities to keep a child active while providing them with a valuable set of life skills. Through participating in water activities, students are able to gain self-discipline, coordination and balance. Studies have also shown that swimming lessons help children grow socially and intellectually.

At Miller Swim School, students are grouped according to both age and swimming ability in the water. Classes are offered year-round, both morning and evening at all facilities. Year-round lessons are offered 7 days a week, with morning, afternoo, and evening options to work around your busy schedule! Safety is our number one priority, both in the water and out.

Miller Swim School also offers party packages and open swim times, water aerobics, swim team, and triathlon training for families and friends to enjoy the pool year-round!

Check out our website for a comprehensive list of programs at millerswimschool.com and follow us on Facebook and Instagram for the latest news and specials!

MINGO VALLEY CHRISTIAN

Contact: Mrs. Lisa Padgett, Admissions

8304 S. 107th E. Ave., Tulsa

918.294.0404

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 volleyball, basketball, soccer, cross country/track, golf and pom.

Join us at our Open House on February 21, 2023 — visit mingovalley.org/openhouse to learn more, or view our virtual tour at mingovalley.org/tour. To schedule a private tour or shadowing day, please email lisapadgett@mingovalley.org.

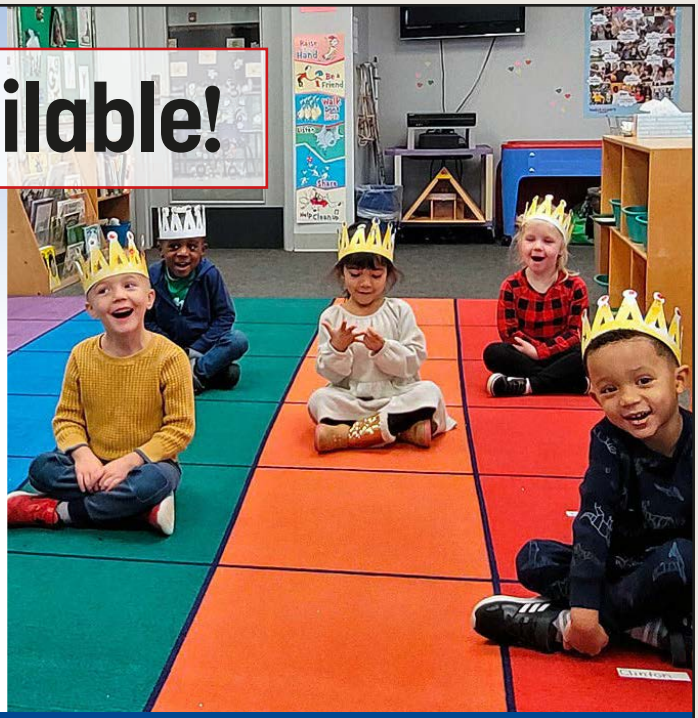
Accreditation: State of Oklahoma (OPSAC); AdvancED; Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)

Monthly tours available!

Call 918-631-5060 to reserve your space today

- Small class sizes – 5:1 student teacher ratio
- Faculty adept at working with gifted students
- Challenging and nurturing environment

PreK3-8th grade gifted children



THE UNIVERSITY OF TULSA
University School
TU is an EEO/AA institution.

UTULSA.EDU/USCHOOL

Happy Campers Academy
A Creative Learning Environment

GREAT ADVENTURES IN LEARNING



- Infants through Pre-K
- After School Care for School Age
- Child-Centered Philosophy
- Full-and Part-time Programs Available

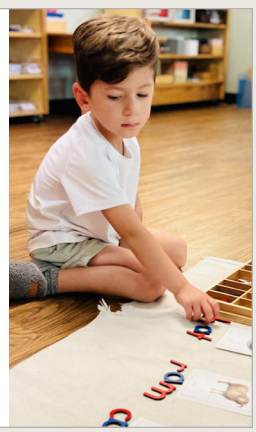
Cherry Street 918-584-2779 | John Knox 918-742-7656 | Temple Israel 918-747-3122

HAPPYCAMPERSACADEMY.COM

Lake Hills Montessori

Serving Children 2–6 Years Old In A Safe, Loving And Stimulating Environment Where Individuality Is Celebrated

5130 E. 101st St. | 918-296-9936
LakeHillsMontessoriTulsa.com



Est. 1971
Early Learning Center
ELC

3 MONTHS–3 YEARS
M-W-F | 9:30am-2:30pm
www.cumctulsa.com
3515 South Harvard Ave. | 918.743.7673

OWASSO PREPARATORY ACADEMY

9341 N. 129th E. Ave., Owasso

918.928.7859

info@owassoprep.org

owassoprep.org

Owasso Preparatory Academy is an affordable hybrid Christian school offering a college prep format, quality extracurricular activities and classroom learning with certified teachers. Classes led by the professional teachers meet from 8:30 a.m.–3 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays for pre-K through 8th grades and Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday for high school. OPA provides the curriculum, and our experienced classroom teachers craft the lesson plans for parents to implement in the home classroom on Monday, Wednesday and Friday (pre-K through 8th grade) or Wednesday and Friday (high school).

Courses are available in Language Arts, Math, Science, History, PE, Art, Music and Drama. Purchase the full schedule of classes, or simply select the subject(s) of your choice and pay by the course. Enrolling pre-K through 12th grade for the 2023 school year!

For More Information: owassoprep.org, 918.928.7859, info@owassoprep.org

Owasso Preparatory Academy admits students of any race, color, national origin, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

RIVERFIELD COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

Contact: Kacey Davenport

2433 W. 61st St., Tulsa

918.446.3553

admissions@riverfield.org

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)

SOCCERCITY TULSA

Contact: Dustin Knight

5817 S. 118th E. Ave., Tulsa

918.249.0044 | soccercitytulsa.com

Ages: 18 months–9 years

Our well-trained coaches will thrill your child with 45–50 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. 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.

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 12. Open enrollment, SIGN UP TODAY!
- Spring break camp will be March 13–17.
- Spring Lil' Kickers will begin March 20. Spring registration will be open by mid-February.

STEWART LITTLE DAY SCHOOL

Contact: Jess Stewart

Located near 31st and Sheridan (Contact us for exact address)

419.571.8787 | stewartlittledayschool.com

stewartlittledayschool@gmail.com

Stewart Little Day School is a nature-based, at-home pre-kindergarten program for children ages 2–5. We focus on learning and development through outdoor play, which includes:

- small class sizes (max. 7 kids) so that children can receive individualized support
- a learning environment that is appropriate — young children need home experiences as well as social experiences
- a focus on science through nature exploration and outdoor play
- developmentally-appropriate math, literacy, and writing lessons

Now enrolling! Contact us to learn more about enrollment or to schedule a visit to our school.

TULSA ZOO

6421 E. 36th St. North, Tulsa

918.669.6600

tulsazoo.org

Encourage and grow your child's passion for wildlife at the Tulsa Zoo! Through our fun and engaging education programs, we inspire guests of all ages. Children can GO WILD in our virtual or in-person classes, learning about animals and meeting them up-close. School and outreach programs offer unique ways to explore the zoo or to bring the zoo to you. The zoo offers year-round learning experiences for kids of all ages. Visit tulsazoo.org to discover more about educational opportunities at the Tulsa Zoo. Tulsa Zoo: Connecting, Caring, Advocating for Wildlife, People and Wild Places.

UNDERCROFT MONTESSORI

Contact: Nancy Davis, Head of School

3745 S. Hudson Ave., Tulsa

918.622.2890

nancy.davis@undercroft.org

undercroft.org

Undercroft Montessori School provides an authentic Montessori education to children from age 3 through 8th grade. As Oklahoma's only accredited Montessori school, we are committed to academic excellence; independence in thought and action; critical and collaborative thinking; and compassion and respect for self, community and the world. The focus of the school is on the individual child, providing an environment that truly inspires a life-long love of learning in small, collaborative classrooms.

We invite you to come and tour Undercroft — the Montessori method is something you have to see to believe! Visit undercroft.org to request your tour today.

For more information, contact Jamie Gartside, Admissions Coordinator, directly at 918.622.2890 or jamie.gartside@undercroft.org.



Founded in 1961, Town & Country School is Northeast Oklahoma's only accredited, non-public, full-day program specifically designed to meet the needs of students who have been diagnosed with learning disabilities, ADHD, and Autism Spectrum Disorders. Serving students in grades 2–12, Town & Country improves each student's life by advancing critical academic, social, and personal skills through individualized attention, family support and flexible curriculum enhancements. Children with learning disabilities, ADHD, and Autism Spectrum Disorders are bright – they just learn differently. We look beyond their difficulties to find our student's strengths. This builds self-esteem and inspires our students to learn. We believe that by providing the tools and skills needed our students can succeed in their life goals.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Denise Jurbala
Director of Admissions
djurbala@tandcschool.org
918-296-3113, ext. 111
TandCschool.org

Town & Country SCHOOL
WHERE DIFFERENCES ARE OUR STRENGTH

Training **tomorrow's leaders today!**

❶ Nurturing, responsive teachers
❷ Academic curriculum: math, science, phonics, art, and Spanish
❸ Age-appropriate learning centers in each classroom

RHEMA Child Development Center

Call to enroll your child today!
918-258-0594
1025 W. Kenosha
Broken Arrow, OK 74012
RhemaChildCare.com



School Highlights

Parents, teachers and students love their schools! Here are some of their reasons:



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
JTHOMAS@VICTORY.COM | 918-491-7720 | VCSTULSA.ORG



OSUIT represents the working field — the people who can easily get jobs after graduation because our training makes us more hireable. We receive amazing instruction from very talented people and they prepare us for what the industry is really like and provide guidance when we need it.

ISA MORROW

OSU INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

1801 E 4TH STREET | OKMULGEE, OK | OSUIT.EDU
BE TRUE TO YOU AT OSUIT. WHERE GRADUATION MEANS YOU'RE HIRED



At Holland Hall, I have always felt like I belonged and felt loved by the inviting community of students, teachers, and families. Choosing to send me to Holland Hall was the best choice my parents made for me, and I could not be more grateful for the way this school has changed my life.

MADDIE, 10TH GRADE

HOLLAND HALL 100 CENTENNIAL 1922 – 2022

5666 EAST 81ST STREET | TULSA, OK 74137
APARRISH@HOLLANDHALL.ORG | 918-481-1111 | HOLLANDHALL.ORG



I love University School because of so many things, but my favorite thing about it is the learning environment. The students get very close to each other, even across grades and have very strong friendships. If you don't understand something, it's easy to approach a teacher and ask for help. Saying "I don't know" in front of the class doesn't feel intimidating, or like people will laugh at you, because they understand that we are all learning. At USchool, we have all sorts of fun activities like movie nights, clubs, and seasonal markets with things made by students. I'm proud to tell people that I go to USchool!

– Evelyn, 7th grade

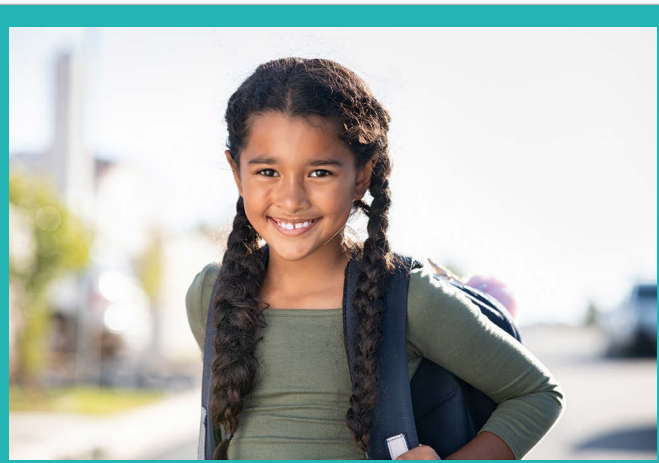
THE UNIVERSITY OF TULSA
University School
TU is an EEO/AA institution.



We're so grateful for Miss Helen's! My daughter always felt like it was "home". The class sizes were small, and she learned everything from computers to music to Spanish/French and even cheerleading from 3 years old all the way through 5th grade. It's a very well-rounded education! When she graduated from 5th grade, she was completely prepared for middle school at Holland Hall. The teachers really paid attention to all the little details of learning with my daughter. At her 5th grade graduation, my daughter said this, "A school is built with brick and mortar, but Miss Helen's is built with love and care."

MISS HELEN'S PRIVATE SCHOOL

918-622-2327 | Director@MissHelens.com
MissHelens.com | 4849 South Mingo, Tulsa



WANT TO SEE YOUR SCHOOL FEATURED HERE?

Advertise with **TulsaKids**!

Contact **BrandiMooreTK@gmail.com** or **LindseyCopesTK@gmail.com** or call 918-582-8504.

tulsakids



Did you know? Metro Christian Academy offers a Spanish Immersion enrollment option for children entering Pre-K and Kindergarten.

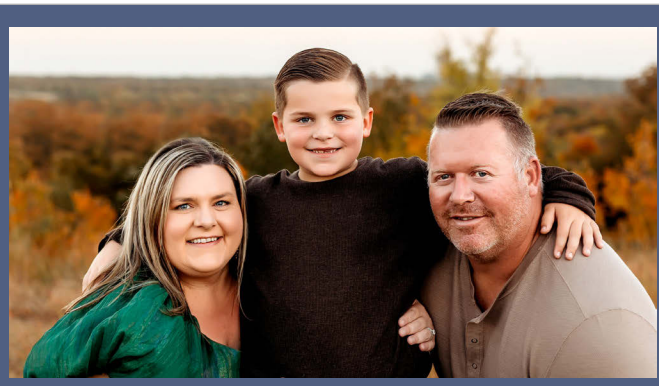
Spanish Immersion is a proven method of educating children by immersing them in a second language. At Metro, reading/literacy, math, science, history, and Bible are all taught in Spanish. Enrichment classes like art, music, PE, library, STEM, lunch, recess, and chapel remain in English. Beginning in third grade, students receive some English-specific instruction.

Because second language acquisition is best at an early age, new students may only enter the program in pre-school, kindergarten, or first grade (space permitting). One Spanish Immersion section is offered alongside traditional learning classrooms through fifth grade.

Visit metroca.com/spanish-immersion to learn more.

METRO CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

6363 S TRENTON AVE | TULSA, OK 74136
918-745-9868 | METROCA.COM



We chose Monte Cassino because no other school in the Tulsa metro delivers a more individualized education in such a magical and happy environment. Each child is met exactly where they are and showered with love, kindness, grace and the exact amount of support they need to be successful not only in the classroom but in life as well. My family firmly believes that Monte Cassino is the happiest and most loving place on earth.

THE STANTON FAMILY

MONTE CASSINO
A Benedictine School

2206 S LEWIS AVE | TULSA, OK 74114
CONTACT: BROOKE JONES | 918-746-4238 | MONTECASSINO.ORG



We are so grateful to be part of Wright Christian Academy! WCA has provided a rigorous curriculum that has challenged our children academically. They have inspired our children's pursuit of Christ through a biblical worldview and numerous outreach activities. And they have created a culture that fosters authentic community where we all feel equipped, supported, and loved. Wright Christian Academy is more than just a school, it's a family - a family we are honored to be a part of!

The Hailey Family

WRIGHT CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

11391 EAST ADMIRAL PLACE TULSA, OK 74116
INFO@WRIGHTCHRISTIANACADEMY.COM 918-438-0922
WWW.WRIGHTCHRISTIANACADEMY.COM



Owasso Preparatory Academy is an affordable **hybrid** Christian school offering a college prep format, quality extracurricular activities, and classroom learning with certified teachers. Classes led by professional teachers meet Tuesdays and Thursdays for Pre-K through 8th grade and Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday for 9th through 12th grade. OPA provides the curriculum and our experienced classroom teachers craft the lesson plans for parents to implement in the home classroom on Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays. (Pre-K through 8th grade) or Wednesday and Friday (High School).

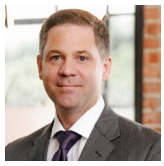
Courses are available in Language Arts, Math, Science, History, PE, Art, Music, & Drama in addition to many extracurricular activities. Purchase the full schedule of classes, or simply select the subject(s) of your choice and pay by the course. Now enrolling Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grades for the 2023 school year!

Owasso Preparatory Academy admits students of any race, color, national origin, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

OWASSO PREPARATORY ACADEMY LIONS

9341 N 129TH E AVE | OWASSO, OK 74055
INFO@OWASSOPREP.ORG | 918-928-7859 | OWASSOPREP.ORG

BUNDY LAW OFFICE



Aaron Bundy
Trial Lawyer

May I travel with my child during my divorce?

When the divorce process begins, a special law is triggered called the "Automatic Temporary Injunction." The Automatic Temporary Injunction was designed to protect each spouse's rights pending a court order, and it includes some provisions concerning minor children. Several parts of the Automatic Temporary Injunction could impact travel with your children:

1. Neither parent may disrupt or withdraw their children from an educational facility and programs where the children historically have been enrolled, or day care.
2. Neither parent may hide the children from the other parent.
3. Neither parent may take the children outside of the State of Oklahoma, directly or in concert with others, except for vacations of two (2) weeks or less duration, without the prior written consent of the other parent, which shall not be unreasonably withheld.

Communication is critical. Even if you have long-standing vacation plans of less than two weeks in duration, it is important to share the itinerary and schedule with the other parent to avoid any misunderstanding. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to get permission from your assigned judge to travel out of state with your child while your divorce is pending.

2509 E. 21st Street,
Tulsa, OK 74114
918.208.0129
BundyLawOffice.com

BUNDY LAW OFFICE

HTR PEDIATRIC THERAPY



Kaylee Broce, MOT, OTR/L

My pediatrician has recommended occupational therapy for my child. What is occupational therapy, and how can it help?

Occupational therapy focuses on the daily activities that help children grow, develop and learn. These activities include dressing, self-feeding, toileting, mobility, socializing with peers and, most importantly, play! Occupational therapists are experts in child development that prioritize parents' goals in order to enhance and improve a child's participation at home, school, the community and social contexts.

OT assesses the strengths of a child and the barriers that are impacting their ability to be successful in these daily tasks. This assessment focuses on the areas of sensory processing, self-regulation, muscle tone, motor planning, attention, impulse control, executive functioning, strength and range of motion, positioning, visual motor and perceptual development, and fine motor skills.

Occupational therapy uses play and functional-based activities to motivate children to work toward their parents' goals. A wide range of children currently receive OT, including both typically developing children as well as neurodivergent, congenital and developmentally delayed populations. If you have more questions, ask your pediatrician, or follow up with your referral source to learn more about how occupational therapy can help your child!

6846 S Canton Ave Suite 120,
Tulsa, OK 74136
918.806.0106
HTRPediatrics.com

HTR PEDIATRIC THERAPY

MILLER SWIM SCHOOL



Sarah Clavin

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?

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

Miller swim school

LICE CLINICS OF AMERICA – MIDSOUTH



Wade Huntsman
Owner

Do you have to comb to treat lice?

Yes and no. If you use Rid, Nix or any other pesticide to treat, then you must comb out the nits (eggs). If you don't, the next wave will hatch, and the infestation will continue. In fact, these are called "comb-out treatments."

Modern medical treatments do not require combing. At Lice Clinics of America, treatments are completed with the FDA-cleared AirAlle medical device. The treatment dehydrates and kills all bugs and eggs, eliminating the need for a strand-by-strand egg removing comb-out. Not only does dehydration treatment save an enormous amount of time, it's also much more comfortable for the patient. Speed, comfort and no pesticides make dehydration treatment much more appealing for moms of young kids. As does its effectiveness, with a success rate of over 99%.

State governments are increasingly recommending medical dehydration treatment. Most recent was the State of Arkansas, which updated its recommendations in the fall of 2022 to include dehydration.

3421 E. 21st Street
Tulsa, OK 74114
918.779.0001
LiceClinicsMidsouth.com

Lice Clinics OF AMERICA®

JANUARY 2023

SCAN THE QR CODE
to find more events at
tulsakids.com/calendar!



TULSA
OILERS GAME
JANUARY 8
Details p. **44**

Defend the Rig! A Tulsa Oilers game is fun for the whole family.

PHOTO COURTESY TULSA OILERS



JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR
JANUARY 24–29
Details p. **47**

Erich W. Schleck in the North American Tour of **Jesus Christ Superstar**.

PHOTO BY EVAN ZIMMERMAN FOR MURPHYMADE



WALKING TOUR
AT TULSA ZOO
WEEKLY
Details p. **45**

Escape to the tropics in **Tulsa Zoo's Rainforest** building. It's 80 degrees year-round and home to 200+ animals.

PHOTO COURTESY TULSA ZOO

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
TULSAZOO



The **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration Society's 44th Tulsa MLK Parade** is Monday, January 16. Details at mlktulsa.com.

January 1 Sunday

ARVEST WINTERFEST

All Ages, through Jan. 8, BOK Center, 200 S. Denver Ave., tulsawinterfest.com

Don't miss your chance to go ice skating in downtown Tulsa! Arvest Winterfest runs through Jan. 8.

January 2 Monday

TEEN TIME! F

For middle and high schoolers, 3:30-5 p.m., Charles Page Library, 551 E. 4th St., Sand Springs, tulsalibrary.org

After school, come and play with the library's Nintendo Switch or LEGOs, and maybe even enjoy some crafts or a movie.

AUDITIONS FOR *THE (ALMOST) TRUE STORY OF HANSEL AND GRETEL* F

All ages, 6:30 p.m., Spotlight Theatre, 1381 S. Riverside Dr., facebook.com/spotlightchildrenstheatre

Children are invited to audition for Spotlight Children's Theatre's upcoming production! All experience levels welcome. Please bring a photo of yourself for the director. Repeats Jan. 3.

January 3 Tuesday

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: BILINGUAL F

Ages 0-5, 11-11:30 a.m., Martin Regional Library, 2601 S. Garnett Rd., tulsalibrary.org

Enjoy stories, songs and activities in English and Spanish.

January 4 Wednesday

STORYTIME AT TULSA ZOO W

All ages, 10 a.m., Tulsa Zoo, 6421 E. 36th St. N., tulsazoo.org

Listen to a story and meet an animal ambassador each Wednesday morning.

January 5 Thursday

STORYTIME IN THE MUSEUM W

All ages, 10 a.m., Philbrook Museum, 2727 S. Rockford Rd., philbrook.org

Head to Philbrook for their weekly storytime! Included in admission.

RÉSUMÉ WRITING 101 F

For adults and high schoolers, 3-4 p.m., Martin Regional Library, 2601 S. Garnett Rd., tulsalibrary.org

Learn how to construct a basic résumé and about the library's online JobNow service and résumé help sections.

TEEN NIGHT F

For high schoolers, 5-7 p.m., Schusterman-Benson Library, 3333 E. 32nd Pl., tulsalibrary.org

This casual monthly hangout has crafts and games.

January 6 Friday

FAMILY NATURE WALK + NATURE FUN FRIDAY W

All ages, 10-11:30 a.m., Philbrook Museum, 2727 S. Rockford Rd., philbrook.org

Talk a guided nature walk, then enjoy a hands-on, nature-themed activity. Included with admission.

NEW YEAR, NEW PLAN, NEW VISION: PLANNER, JOURNAL AND VISION BOARD CRAFTING F

Ages 11+, 4-5 p.m., Broken Arrow Library, 300 W. Broadway Ave., Broken Arrow, tulsalibrary.org

Start your new year off right by designing a personalized journal or planner and bring your goals to life with a vision board.

January 7 Saturday

TULSA FARMERS' MARKET

All ages, 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m., Kendall Whittier Square, Admiral & Lewis, tulsafarmersmarket.org

Tulsa Farmers' Market continues during the winter months! Repeats Jan. 21.

LIFE SKILLS: BASIC SEWING F

All ages, 12:30-3:30 p.m., Pratt Library, 3219 S. 113th W. Ave., Sand Springs, tulsalibrary.org

Learn the basics of quilting while making a canning jar pot holder. Participants ages 14 and younger will need to be accompanied by someone 16 or older.

DIA DE REYES: THREE KINGS DAY FESTIVITIES F

All ages, 1-4 p.m., Rudisill Regional Library, 1520 N. Hartford Ave., tulsalibrary.org

This event celebrates a wonderful Latinx tradition and will include performances, presents, prizes and fun for everyone.

BRIDGERTON BALL F

For adults, 2-4 p.m., Central Library, 400 Civic Center, tulsalibrary.org

You are cordially invited to an enchanting afternoon of crafts, trivia and dancing. Wear your best period attire. Must pre-register at tulsalibrary.org/events or by calling 918.549.7323.

January 8 Sunday

MONTHLY MOVIE MATINEE F

For adults, 2-4 p.m., Central Library, 400 Civic Center, tulsalibrary.org

Watch a classic, critically acclaimed film. Coffee and cookies will be provided.

TULSA OILERS GAME

All ages, 4:05 p.m., BOK Center, 200 S. Denver Ave., tulsaoilers.com

Cheer for the Tulsa Oilers as they play Wichita Thunder!

F FREE W WEEKLY

January 9 Monday

DANCE AND SING-A-LONG IN LITTLE LAB

Ages 0-4, 11 a.m., Discovery Lab, 3123 S. Riverside Dr., discoverylab.org

The youngest Discovery Lab visitors are invited to enjoy special programing in the Little Lab!

OXLEY SEEDLINGS

Ages 1-5, 10-11 a.m., Oxley Nature Center, 6700 Mohawk Blvd., oxleynaturecenter.org

Bring your little ones for a fun time outside or natural craft activity. Must pre-register by calling 918.596.9054.

PAWS FOR READING (F)

For elementary students, 3:30-4:30 p.m., Schusterman-Benson Library, 3333 E. 32nd Pl., tulsalibrary.org

Elementary schoolers are invited to read their favorite books to a registered therapy dog. Must pre-register in person at Schusterman-Benson or by calling 918.549.7323.

MIDDLE GRADE BOOK CLUB WITH MR. PAUL (F)

Ages 9-12, 5-6 p.m., Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St., tulsalibrary.org

Discuss the first half of *Long Lost* by Jacqueline West, a 2023 Intermediate Sequoyah Award nominee. Discuss the second half on Jan. 23.

January 10 Tuesday

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: FAMILY (F)

Ages 0-5, 4-4:30 p.m., Nathan Hale Library, 6038 E. 23rd St., tulsalibrary.org

Bring the whole family for this 0-to-5 storytime!

WRITE TIME (F)

Ages 8-12, 4-5 p.m., Herman and Kate Kaiser Library, 5202 S. Hudson Ave., tulsalibrary.org

Get ready for the Young People's Creative Writing Contest with fun writing prompts and activities.

THRIFTY NIGHT (W)

All ages, 8:30-10:30 p.m., Wheels and Thrills, 10637 N. Garnett Rd., Owasso, wheelsandthrills.com

Enjoy an evening of discounted fun at Wheels and Thrills.

January 11 Wednesday

DON'T STOP THE MUSIC! (F)

For preschoolers and toddlers, 11-11:30 a.m., Martin Regional Library, 2601 S. Garnett Rd., tulsalibrary.org

This interactive program features songs, dancing and lots of fun.

BOOKS AND BAKING (F)

For grades 3-5, 3:15-4:30 p.m., Pratt Library, 3219 S. 113th W. Ave., Sand Springs, tuslalibrary.org

This is a club for book and snack lovers. Read *Measuring Up* by Lily LaMotte, then join to make a snack while discussing the book.

KIDS CONNECTION (F)

Grades K-5, 4:30-5:30 p.m., The Arc of Oklahoma, 2516 E. 71st St., Suite A, thearcok.org

Social group for students in kindergarten through 5th grade with high-functioning autism. Contact Sherilyn at SWalton@TheArcOK.org or Steve at SPitts@TheArcOK.org for more information.

January 12 Thursday

TINY TOTS! (W)

Ages 0-6, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Wheels and Thrills, 10637 N. Garnett Rd., Owasso, wheelsandthrills.com

Kids ages 6 and under are invited to skate, play, ride and jump. Don't forget your socks!

DE-STRESS FEST (F)

For middle schoolers through adults, 4-6 p.m., Nathan Hale Library, 6038 E. 23rd St., tulsalibrary.org

Join for various mindfulness activities, including yoga and mindful breathing.

January 13 Friday

MEMBERS-ONLY NIGHT

All ages, 6-8 p.m., Discovery Lab, 3123 S. Riverside Dr., discoverylab.org

Discovery Lab is open late for members! Join now at discoverylab.org/join.

TULSA OILERS GAME

All ages, 7:05 p.m., BOK Center, 200 S. Denver Ave., tulsaoilers.com

Cheer for the Tulsa Oilers as they play Rapid City Rush! Repeats Jan. 14.

January 14 Saturday

WALKING TOUR AT TULSA ZOO (W)

All ages, 10-11 a.m. and 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Tulsa Zoo, 6421 E. 36th St. N., tulsazoo.org

Learn about specific animals at the Tulsa Zoo and the conservation of these species in the wild.

AUDITIONS FOR *THE SECRET GARDEN* (F)

Ages 8-18, 3 p.m., Clark Youth Theatre, 4825 S. Quaker Ave., clarkyouththeatre.com

Audition for Clark Youth Theatre's production of *The Secret Garden*. Be prepared to sing 16-32 bars of a song and learn a brief dance combination. Additional info available online.

FAMILY BONFIRE

All ages, 4-7 p.m., Herman and Kate Kaiser YMCA, 5400 S. Olympia Ave., gilcrease.org

Join Gilcrease at the Herman and Kate Kaiser YMCA for an evening bonfire with art-making activities, performances, snacks and more in celebration of Pop Chalee's *Forest Scene!* Advance registration required.

INVIGORATING: PROKOFIEV'S SYMPHONY NO. 5

All ages, 7:30 p.m., Tulsa PAC, 110 E. 2nd St., tulsasymphony.org

Join Tulsa Symphony for an evening of beautiful music, featuring two pieces by Ottorino Respighi and Sergei Prokofiev's *Symphony No. 5.*

3 Sensory-Friendly Events

SENSORY AWARENESS NIGHT

January 3, 6-9 p.m.
Oklahoma Aquarium, 300 Aquarium Dr., Jenks

With low lights and quiet music, you and your family can explore the Oklahoma Aquarium without the usual crowd. **okaquarium.org**

SENSORY SKATE SUNDAY

January 8, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Wheels and Thrills, 10637 N. Garnett Rd., Owasso

On the first Sunday of each month, Wheels and Thrills will suspend its arcade and laser tag, and there will be no flashing lights or loud music. **wheelsandthrills.com**

SENSORY FRIENDLY SUNDAY

January 8, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
Discovery Lab, 3123 S. Riverside Dr.

This is a time for guests who need a quieter, less crowded place to explore Discovery Lab with their families. **discoverylab.org**

This information is correct to the best of our knowledge. However, check with the organizer before attending events, as information can change.

January 15 Sunday

SUNDAY FUNDAY (W)

All ages, 12:30-6 p.m., Wheels and Thrills, 10637 N. Garnett Rd., Owasso, wheelsandthrills.com

Enjoy an afternoon of fun for the whole family at Wheels and Thrills!

January 16 Monday

44TH ANNUAL MLK COMEMORATIVE PARADE (F)

All ages, 11 a.m., Historic Greenwood District, mlktulsa.com

The theme for the 44th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Parade is "We Are Stronger When Working Together." The parade's goal is to encourage participants to think about Dr. King's legacy and their part in keeping his dream alive.

January 17 Tuesday

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: BABIES AND TODDLERS/ STAY AND PLAY (F)

For babies and toddlers, 10:15-11:05 a.m., Brookside Library, 1207 E. 45th Pl., tulsalibrary.org

This beginning storytime focuses on helping your baby or toddler develop important literacy skills while emphasizing the fun of reading.

January 18 Wednesday

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: BABIES AND TODDLERS (F)

For babies and toddlers, 10-10:25 a.m., Schusterman-Benson Library, 3333 E. 32nd Pl., tulsalibrary.org

This beginning storytime focuses on helping your baby or toddler develop important literacy skills while emphasizing the fun of reading.

BRING YOUR OWN BOOK (F)

For high schoolers, 4-5 p.m., Herman and Kate Kaiser Library, 5202 S. Hudson Ave., tulsalibrary.org

Does your book have the best cover, villain or love story? Come and eat snacks, do fun activities and convince others why the book you brought is the best of ALL the books.

PAWS FOR READING (F)

For elementary schoolers, 4-5 p.m., Owasso Library, 103 W. Broadway St., Owasso, tulsalibrary.org

Elementary schoolers are invited to read their favorite books to a registered therapy dog.

January 19 Thursday

FREE BLOOD PRESSURE CHECK (F)

For adults, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Broken Arrow Library, 300 W. Broadway Ave., Broken Arrow, tulsalibrary.org

Stop in for a free blood pressure check provided by Hillcrest Hospital South.

HOMEWORK RESCUE! EXPLORING TCCL'S DIGITAL RESOURCES (F)

For middle schoolers to adults, 6-7 p.m., Collinsville Library, 1223 W. Main St., Collinsville, tulsalibrary.org

Learn how to use TCCL's digital resources for school projects, reports and research papers.

January 20 Friday

PAWS FOR READING (F)

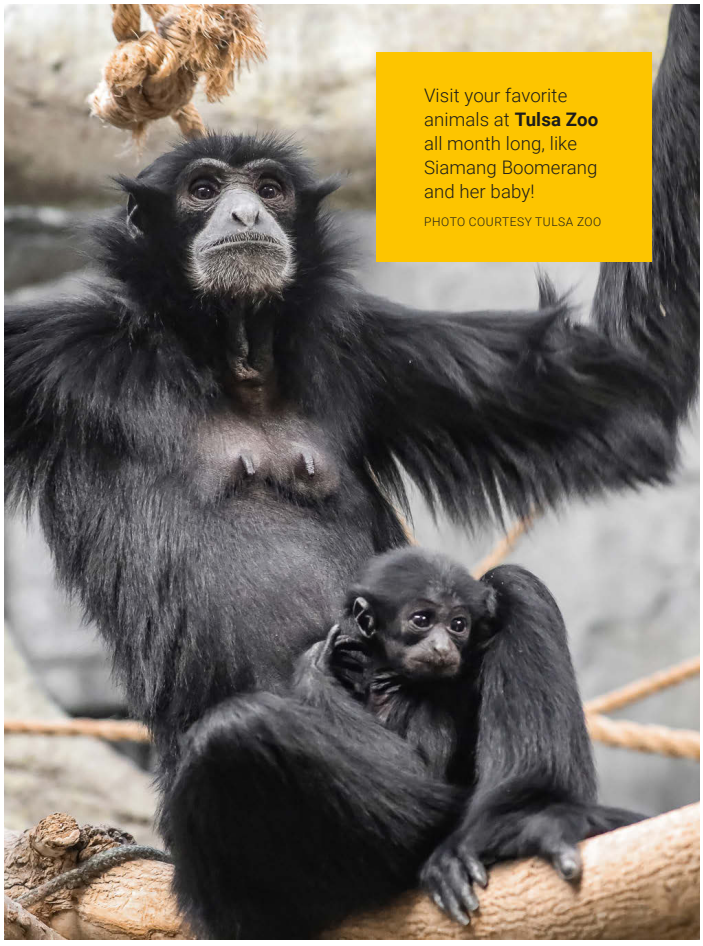
For elementary schoolers, 3:30-4:30 p.m., Brookside Library, 1207 E. 45th Pl., tulsalibrary.org

Elementary schoolers are invited to read their favorite books to a registered therapy dog. Must pre-register at tulsalibrary.org/events or by calling 918.549.7323.

TULSA OILERS GAME

All ages, 7:05 p.m., BOK Center, 200 S. Denver Ave., tulsaoilers.com

Cheer for the Tulsa Oilers as they play Utah Grizzlies! Repeats Jan. 21, and Jan. 22 at 4:05 p.m.



Visit your favorite animals at **Tulsa Zoo** all month long, like Siamang Boomerang and her baby!

PHOTO COURTESY TULSA ZOO

January 21 Saturday

SATURDAY OPEN STUDIO (W)

All ages, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Philbrook Museum, 2727 S. Rockford Rd., philbrook.org

Drop-in artmaking for all ages.

EXPLORE THE FLORA (F)

All ages, 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m., Oxley Nature Center, 6700 Mohawk Blvd., oxleynaturecenter.org

Join Oxley Nature Center for a monthly walk to find out more about the lives of the plants in our habitats.

SATURDAY MOVIE MATINEE (F)

All ages, 2-4 p.m., Bixby Library, 20 E. Breckenridge Ave., Bixby, tulsalibrary.org

Enjoy a family friendly movie (rated PG).

January 22 Sunday

OPEN SWIM AT MILLER SWIM SCHOOL (W)

All ages, 4-6 p.m., Miller Swim School, 6415 S. Mingo Rd., tulsalibrary.org

Practice your swim skills and have fun! Also occurs Saturdays.

January 23 Monday

LEGO BUILD (F)

For elementary to high schoolers, 10:30-11:30 a.m., South Broken Arrow Library, 3600 S. Chestnut Ave., Broken Arrow, tulsalibrary.org

Join the library to put engineering principles into practice by building a different challenge each month.

January 24 Tuesday

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: FAMILY/ STAY AND PLAY (F)

Ages 0-5, 10:30-11:30 a.m., Central Library, 400 Civic Center, tulsalibrary.org

Bring the whole family for this 0-to-5 storytime!

TEEN TUESDAY: BOARD GAME IN A BOX (F)

For middle and high schoolers, 4:30-5:30 p.m., South Broken Arrow Library, 3600 S. Chestnut Ave., Broken Arrow, tulsalibrary.org

Have you ever wanted to design your own board game? Bring your ideas, and the library will provide supplies and guidance! Must pre-register at tulsalibrary.org/events or by calling 918.549.7323.

January 25 Wednesday

COMIC FAIR (F)

For elementary schoolers to adults, 3:30-5:45 p.m., Suburban Acres Library, 4606 N. Garrison Ave., tulsalibrary.org

Explore some of the wide variety of comic books and graphic novels the library has to offer.

TEEN CONNECTION (F)

Grades 6-12, 4:30-6 p.m., The Arc of Oklahoma, 2516 E. 71st St., Suite A, thearcok.org

This is a social group for students with high-functioning autism. For more information, contact 918.582.8272 or Sherilyn at SWalton@TheArcOK.org or Steve at SPitts@TheArcOK.org.

January 26 Thursday

WINTER WEATHER STEAM WONDERS! (F)

For preschoolers and toddlers, 10:30-11:30 a.m., Central Library, 400 Civic Center, tulsalibrary.org

Do wonderful, winter weather-themed crafts with a science twist.

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: FAMILY — BEDTIME STORIES (F)

Ages 0-5, 6:30-7 p.m., Owasso Library, 103 S. Broadway St., Owasso, tulsalibrary.org

Bring the whole family for this 0-to-5 storytime!

January 27 Friday

FINAL FRIDAY ARCADE (F)

For middle and high schoolers, 4:30-5:30 p.m., Maxwell Park Library, 1313 N. Canton, tulsalibrary.org

Play games on the library's Nintendo Switch and Xbox. Space is limited, so taking turns is a must.

JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR

Recommended ages 12+, 8 p.m., Tulsa PAC, 110 E. 2nd St., celebrityattractions.com

Celebrating its 50th anniversary, this iconic musical returns to stage. Additional showtimes, January 24-29.

January 28 Saturday

OPEN SWIM (W)

All ages, 12:45-2:45 p.m., Miller Swim School Owasso, 10001 N. 127th E. Ave., millerswimschool.com

Practice your swim skills over the winter while having fun!

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: FAMILY — PUNK ROCK EDITION! (F)

2-2:30 p.m., Schusterman-Benson Library, 3333 E. 32nd Pl., tulsalibrary.org

Listen to punk-themed books while enjoying fun songs and time for kids to play percussion instruments. Mohawks are highly encouraged!

MOVIE MADNESS (F)

All ages, 2-4 p.m., Suburban Acres Library, 4606 N. Garrison Ave., tulsalibrary.org

Join Tulsa City-County Library for an afternoon of film in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement.

January 29 Sunday

TULSA OILERS GAME

All ages, 4:05 p.m., BOK Center, 200 S. Denver Ave., bokcenter.com

Cheer for the Tulsa Oilers as they play hockey against the Allen Americans!

January 30 Monday

DIGITAL LITERACY LAB ORIENTATION (F)

For high schoolers and adults, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Central Library, 400 Civic Center, tulsalibrary.org

Learn more about the library's AEP/PSO Foundation Digital Literacy Lab. Must pre-register by calling 918.549.7323.

January 31 Tuesday

BIRDS AND BREWS (F) (W)

All ages, 8-10 a.m., Ray Harral Nature Center, 7101 S. 3rd St., Broken Arrow, facebook.com/rayharralnaturecenter

Explore the early morning sights and sounds of the Nature Park while enjoying a nice cup of coffee.

METRO CHRISTIAN ACADEMY MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL TOUR

8:30-9:15 a.m., Metro Christian Academy, 6363 S. Trenton Ave., visitmetro.com

See all that Metro Christian Academy has to offer. Register online at visitmetro.com or call the admissions office at 918.745.9868 ext. 155.



Elvie Ellis and the company of the North American Tour of **Jesus Christ Superstar**.

PHOTO BY EVAN ZIMMERMAN FOR MURPHYMADE.

This information is correct to the best of our knowledge. However, check with the organizer before attending events, as information can change.

WELCOME TO BOSTON AVENUE WEEKDAY SCHOOL!

We are a licensed center, providing a quality early education for children 4 months to Pre-K! We learn through play, age and developmentally appropriate activities, extra-curricular opportunities, and early faith themes!

CONTACT DIRECTOR PAULA GRADNEY-GARNER
AT 918-699-0112 OR PRESCHOOL@BOSTONAVENUE.ORG

WORLD PREMIERE
Cinderella
FEBRUARY 9-12 • TULSA PAC
tulsa ballet
Marcello Angelini | Artistic Director

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$10 OFF TICKETS
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TPAC

soccer city TULSA

LIL KICKERS 2ND WINTER SESSION:
January 17 – March 12
NO HOLIDAY BREAKS!
OPEN REGISTRATION! SIGN UP TODAY!
tulsakids family favorites 2021 WINNER
THANK YOU, READERS, FOR VOTING US THE BEST SOCCER PROGRAM/ATHLETIC LEAGUE IN GREATER TULSA SINCE 2013!
TULSAKIDS Family Favorites 2022 WINNER
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