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PARENTS CAN HELP TEACH
CHILDREN TO BE GOOD

F R I E N D S

MAKING MOM FRIENDS:
THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

SPECIAL:

2 Baby &
HANDBOOK
INSIDE

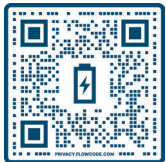
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Baby & Handbook

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A F R I E N D

IS SOMEONE WHO
LIKES YOU

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, my mom gave me a little book (yes, I still have it) called *A Friend Is Someone Who Likes You*. This book, by Joan Walsh Anglund, with its charming illustrations, is still available. You can even watch it on YouTube. As a kid who loved being outside or just sitting with my dog, I appreciated the expansive view of friendship.

COVID forced us into a worldwide experiment in isolation. Elderly people in nursing homes were isolated from their families. Most of us were only seeing our immediate families or small numbers of "safe" friends. Children and youth were isolated from their friends, missing out on an important developmental aspect of growing up — socialization. Human beings function better when we socialize, and most children learn the skills that it takes to be a friend and to have friends in school. Two years without school was tough on our youngest citizens.

I recently had lunch with a friend that I've known since college. All of our children are grown, but we were reminiscing on friendship over time, and how important it was to have our (mostly) mom friends during our kids' elementary school years. Those friends became our tribe, our posse, at the time. Some were reliable carpooling friends. Others were great at listening and commiserating about kids and school. There were the friends that could be called in a pinch to watch your kid for a couple of hours. And, of course, I always admired the PTA parents who took on the responsibility of running that organization.

My kids' friendships provided them with a similar sense of belonging. They learned about compromising, about being happy for a friend or sad for a friend. Having a friend helps kids get to know



themselves, just as much as it helps them get to know others.

For both children and adults, having friends lessens stress and makes us feel good.

Now that kids can interact once again, it's a good time to remind them about how to be a friend. And, not to forget moms, we need friends, too. Often, parents can feel isolated and alone. Read our articles about friendships in this issue.

You'll also find an entire section devoted to pregnancy and babies in these pages. If you're about to be a mom or know someone who is, you'll find resources, information and more in our Baby Handbook.

If you're looking for connections, join our Facebook group, TulsaParents. We like you.


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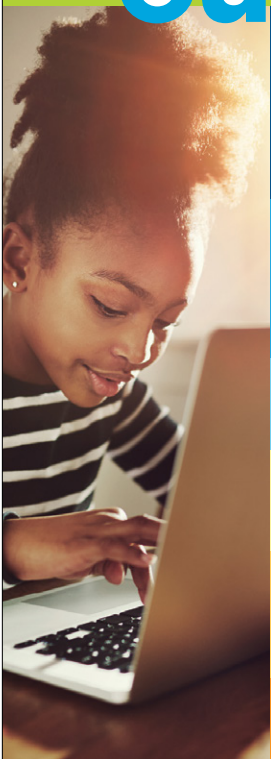
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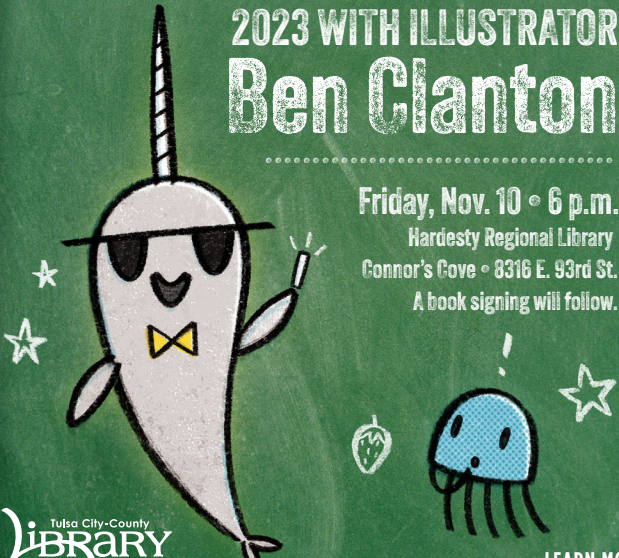



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NEW BABY GIRAFFE AT THE TULSA ZOO

A female giraffe calf is doing well after being born at the Tulsa Zoo last month. The calf was born to mother, Zoe, and father, Hekaya, through Tulsa Zoo's ongoing participation in the Association of Zoos & Aquariums Giraffe Species Survival Plan®.

The first important milestone after birth for the calf is to stand. Zoe's calf stood only 30 minutes after being born. It is also latching and nursing well, which is another important milestone.

Zoe and her calf will often be visible in the reserve yard and the Osage Casino and Hotel Giraffe Barn, but at times may be in other areas of the barn as the calf learns to move through the different sections of the facility.



CIRCLE OF CARE HOSTS FAMILY EVENT AT DISCOVERY LAB

Circle of Care, Oklahoma's largest private provider of foster care services, invites families to *Everyone Has a Story – Discover Yours*, a Friends of Children event presented by the Helmerich Trust. This new event in Tulsa aims to raise funds for children and families in crisis. Scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 30, 2023, at Discovery Lab, the event will feature a performance and activities by Hot Toast, a "music company that collaborates with kids to create the ultimate mixtape for growing up."

The event will begin at 10 a.m. in the event space at Discovery Lab. In addition to the performance and kids' activity, The Palate at Ranch Acres will provide brunch, and attendees will hear stories from Circle of Care clients. At noon, families will have full access to Discovery Lab for the remainder of the day.

Proceeds from the event will benefit Circle of Care. Established in 1917, Circle of Care provides foster care services, but also offers programs that offer mental health services, benefits single mothers and young people who age out of the foster care system, and mentors parents seeking reunification with their children. Their stated mission is to "bring Christian help, healing and hope to children and families in crisis to ensure a safe, healthy and spiritual future."

What: *Everyone Has a Story – Discover Yours*, a Friends of Children event presented by the Helmerich Trust

When: Saturday, Sept. 30, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Where: Discovery Lab, 3123 Riverside Dr., Tulsa, OK 74104

How: For sponsorship and ticket info, visit givebutter.com/friendsofchildrentulsa



ROCK & READ KIDS' LITERACY EVENT

Gaining Ground, a grass-roots literacy non-profit created by educators, is holding an event to support their mission to "develop readers, thinkers and leaders by providing families with engaging literacy experiences and access to high-interest, culturally responsive books." The event, Rock & Read, is set for Saturday, Sept. 9 at 7 p.m. at Bar 473.

Attendees are invited to "sing their hearts out" on the outdoor karaoke stage for prizes, or to just sit back and enjoy the show. There will also be a silent auction and a taco dinner provided by SJS Hospitality and Hotel Indigo. Dinner will be served from 7:15–8:15 p.m.

Gaining Ground uses a research-based approach to provide children with access to engaging books, after-school programming and summer literacy camps. It provides children in underserved communities with support, encouragement, individualized instruction, project-based learning experiences and access to high-interest, culturally responsive books.

What: Rock & Read

When: Saturday, Sept. 9, 7 p.m.

Where: Bar 473, 224 E. Admiral Blvd., Tulsa

How: For tickets, VIP tables and sponsorships, visit gaininggroundliteracy.org



TULSA BALLET ANNOUNCES NEW DANCE EDUCATION SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

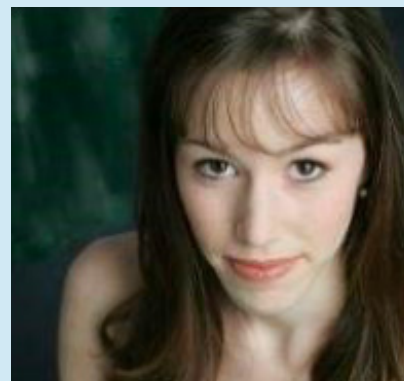
Tulsa Ballet recently announced the appointment of Lauren Richter Henry as the next Tulsa Ballet Center for Dance Education school principal. A distinguished performer and dance educator, Lauren Richter joins Tulsa Ballet Center for Dance Education following her tenure on faculty with San Francisco Ballet School.

"We are thrilled to welcome Lauren Richter to Tulsa Ballet," said Marcello Angelini, Tulsa Ballet Artistic Director and CEO. "Lauren comes to Tulsa Ballet from the position of faculty member of the San Francisco Ballet School, a school that, under the artistic direction of their latest director, Mr. Patrick Armand, has flourished as one of the top American ballet academies. Lauren is also a ballet studio owner, which gives her a great understanding of how to interact with parents and students of all ages and backgrounds, as well as the leadership tools to manage and achieve the academy's artistic goals."

Ms. Richter is certified in Levels 1–8 through the Bolshoi Ballet Academy Teacher Training Program. In addition to a decade of experience as a distinguished dance educator, she also received YAGP's Outstanding Teacher Award in 2021

"I am excited to be joining the Tulsa Ballet Center for Dance Education as school principal," Richter said. "As both a teacher and director, my aim has always been to offer the highest quality training to my students, while taking great care to foster a healthy learning environment in which the student's physical, mental and emotional wellbeing can flourish."

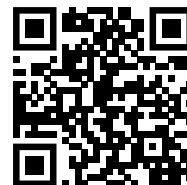
Tulsa Ballet Center for Dance Education's faculty focus on individual instruction for each student at their Broken Arrow and Tulsa Brookside campuses.



WHAT'S GOING ONLINE?

CONTESTS & GIVEAWAYS

Find links to
the following at
tulsakids.com/contests.



ADI ROY AS ALADDIN IN THE NORTH AMERICAN TOUR
OF ALADDIN. PHOTO BY DEEN VANMEER, DISNEY

ALADDIN TICKET GIVEAWAY

From **September 1–14**, enter to win a Family 4-Pack to Disney's *Aladdin*, the hit Broadway musical playing at the Tulsa PAC **September 26–October 1**! Learn more and get tickets at celebrityattractions.com

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CUTEST BABY PHOTO CONTEST!

PHOTO COURTESY: MADELINE CRAWFORD



Submit a photo of your adorable little one **September 1–30** for a chance to win a \$100 On the Cusp gift card, \$25 Kiddlestix gift card, \$25 QuikTrip gift card, some On the Cusp swag and a large Stanley cup.

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TULSA STATE FAIR GIVEAWAY

From **September 7–20**, enter to win 8 tickets to Tulsa State Fair AND 4 Mega Ride passes! Two winners will be chosen; each will receive 8 tickets and 4 Mega Ride passes.

Get details about the 2023 Tulsa State Fair at tulsastatefair.com



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Life with a Neonate Roommate

By **Alicia Kobilnyk**



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.

AT THE END of pregnancy, a mother's heart is torn between two desires: to have her body to herself (Get out, dear baby. Get out.) and to be able to sleep without being awakened by a crying, hungry baby. If there is one thing expectant parents look to with anxious anticipation, even more than birth, it's sleep.

It's now advised by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) that infants sleep in the same room with their parents for six months at least, if not longer. I can say, from experience, that having my baby close enough to hear, see and touch was healing and relaxing for me with all three of my girls. They slept soundly in their bedside bassinet, and I would lie on my side, feeling their belly rise and fall before snuggling down myself.

Infant sleep, particularly newborn sleep, is a different animal than any other stage. What can you expect with your tiny new roommate?

(PLEASE DO) FEED ME AFTER MIDNIGHT

Until your baby returns to birth-weight or is otherwise cleared by your doctor, you will need to wake them up every two to three hours to eat. It sounds simple enough, but you will find it hard both in your heart (But she just went down!) and in practice, as new babies are notoriously sleepy and can be difficult to keep awake long enough to eat. It can take weeks for the return to birth-weight to happen, so prepare your heart for short sleeps. Midnight snacks and morning coffee are your friends.

Even after this time, when they are free to sleep as long as they need, babies will wake at various times for diapers and a feed. Feeding on demand has been shown to promote secure attachment, emotional regulation for both parent and child and reduces the likelihood of weight gain issues such as Failure to Thrive. Babies are darling, cheeky little people, but they are too young to intentionally mislead or manipulate. If a baby is crying, they need your help. Crying is communication.

The **joy** and **trust** in your baby's tiny body as they **sense your closeness** will carry you through many midnight diaper changes and all sorts of feeding challenges.

WORLD'S BUSIEST SLEEPERS

For the first three months, babies often experience "active sleep," during which they move, flutter their eyes open and make endless amounts of endearing little noises and lip smacks. It will seem that baby is awake, but often they are completely asleep. Take a moment and watch before you scoop them up. They often will settle back down into a quieter sleep stage and give you a little longer to shower or eat hot food.

HAVE A PLAN

Preparing for nights with baby really helps to smooth the process when you wake up a bit hazy from your own rest. A small basket by the bed stocked with diapers, wipes, burp rags, pacifiers and any supplies needed for feeding will be a real blessing.

With my babies, I have usually formed a habit from birth to help them learn what to expect and help me when I am groggy. When baby wakes, I use the restroom first (so I am comfortable to hold

baby as long as I need), then scoop baby up and lay her on my bed. I turn on a small ambient touch light and change her diaper, placing the clean one beneath the used one to prevent any midnight sheet laundry. After diapering, I put my baby back in her sleep sack and then pick her up to feed her. When she has had her fill and enjoyed a little cuddle afterwards, I place her in her bed. I wait until she is asleep and lay her down bottom first, then head, before placing my hand on her belly. If she stirs, I reach over while I lie down and use my hand to help her use her pacifier, stroke her face or hold her hand. My newest daughter, now three months old, routinely falls asleep holding my hand or stroking my face as I hold her. Talk about heart-melting.

It is worth noting that for the first few weeks, as I healed from birth, my husband would wake with us and change the baby's diaper while I got ready to feed her. Each family will find the system that works best for them, but ideally everyone can find



GETTY/FIZKES

a way to support both baby, as they acclimate to life outside the womb, and mama, as she heals from growing and expelling a tiny human being.

WHAT IS DAY? WHAT IS NIGHT? WHAT IS HAPPENING?

Babies are born with many fascinating skills and interests, but also have many mundane details they have yet to experience. Among them, the sensation of being cold or hungry, wearing a wet diaper, having a bowel movement and seeing bright lights. Also unknown to your baby are the concepts of day and night, which means you will have to help them understand daily rhythms and what to expect at certain times. It's common for babies to have their "days and nights mixed up," meaning they are more wakeful during the nighttime and sleep more soundly during the day.

You can help your baby learn days and nights by filling days with sunlight, sounds and interaction, leaving nights for calm, quiet and dim lighting. Balancing how

to be interactive during the day without overstimulation or being attentive at night without being too exciting is an artform, but every parent finds their way, and this phase is a brief one.

The key to sharing your life (and your sleeping space) with a new baby is to focus on the relationship you are building. The joy and trust in your baby's tiny body as they sense your closeness will carry you through many midnight diaper changes and all sorts of feeding challenges. And one day, very soon, they will look into the eyes of the one who has held them throughout their first nights, gently rescuing them from cold hands, wet diapers and empty bellies, and share their first genuine smile. To borrow from a common adage, the nights may feel long, but the years will be short. May you find sweetness sufficient to compensate for the temporary lack of shut-eye. **TK**



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Helping Children with Grief: 5 Tools You Can Use

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



"When it comes to creative expression, parents can encourage their children to **journal, draw, create** a photo album, **share stories** about the person, **read books** about grief and **look at photos and videos.**"

GRIEF IS A heavy feeling we get when something unfortunate happens; it can be in the form of a loved one passing or something changing significantly. Grief spares no one, not even our children. As adults, we struggle with grief. Just like adults, children experience grief and may have a difficult time expressing their feelings and dealing with their emotions. How do we, as caregivers, parents, guardians and educators, become solace and strength for our children during this turbulent journey?

Children's author Ta'Shay Mason offers some of those answers in her book series to help children deal with grief—an experience she confronted as a 9-year-old when her father died.

She says, "God placed it on my heart to write a book about grief for children and their families, which turned into a three-book series, *A Child's Journey*

Through Grief. The series fosters a conversation about death and grief, which can be challenging to discuss."

Mason's loss affected her childhood, adolescence and adulthood. She recently had counseling to work through her grief. She discussed the tools caregivers, parents, guardians and educators can use to help their young loved ones deal with grief, such as open dialogue, stability, creative expression and establishing a network of support.

Mason provided the following tools to guide efforts in offering solace and a chance for growth, resilience and healing.

1. Open and honest communication. Encourage open conversations about grief and loss. Be honest and age-appropriate in your explanations. Validate children's feelings and let them know

it's okay to feel sad, angry or confused. Mason suggests, "Parents should be honest about how they are feeling when it comes to grief and communicate that with their children. Doing this lets the child know they are not alone in the household."

She says it is vital that children have a safe place to talk about their emotions, and "if parents are grieving as well, it will be helpful to have a grief counselor to help the family through the process."

2. Provide a support network. Help grieving children build a support network by connecting them with friends, family members or support groups who have experienced similar losses. Knowing they are not alone in their grief can be reassuring and comforting.

Mason suggests that caregivers seek local or national support groups and "connect with the child's teachers, school counselors and family members."

3. Maintain routines and stability. Grieving children can feel overwhelmed and unsettled. Regular routines should be retained as much as possible, such as mealtimes and bedtime. "Maintaining routines and stability helps ensure consistency and a type of normalcy while establishing a new normal without the person," Mason says.

4. Encourage creative expression. Many children find it challenging to verbalize their emotions and should be encouraged to express themselves through creative outlets like drawing, writing or play. Art can be a



therapeutic way for children to process and cope with their feelings.

Mason says, "When it comes to creative expression, parents can encourage their children to journal, draw, create a photo album, share stories about the person, read books about grief and look at photos and videos."

5. Seek professional support if needed. If a child's grief significantly impacts their daily life, behavior or emotions, it is best to seek professional help, such as counseling or therapy.

"Parents should seek professional support at any time for themselves and their child," Mason says. "As the family works toward establishing a new normal, having professional support can help during the process. It can help

the parent and child when different milestones arise. Professional support will not be needed as much as the family learns and applies positive coping skills."

Mason illustrated how we can guide children toward healing and understanding through heartfelt conversations, patient support and creativity. However, parents and caregivers must first be honest about their grief and emotions. Loss impacts each person differently, but children first need love, so they don't have to walk this journey alone. **TK**

For further information on Ta'Shay Mason's book series, *A Child's Journey Through Grief*, please visit tashaymason.com.

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.



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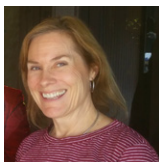


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Horse Therapy: Helping Families Heal

By **Julie Wenger Watson**



Kimberly Whayne, LPC, uses equine therapy to help people of all ages.

BORN INTO A rodeo family, Licensed Professional Counselor and Tulsa native Kimberly Whayne created Overcross Counseling and Equine Services (OCES) to combine her passion for horses with her desire to support her community. On her family's ranch south of downtown, Whayne and her staff offer individual, family and small group counseling, often with a little help from one of the 15 horses and assorted farm animals who share the space.

"We provide mental health services with a little bit of a creative and alternative approach, using the horse as a partner in our sessions," Whayne says. "As a therapist, I wanted to offer the community an environment that was more calming and conducive for them to be able to talk about their crisis or their trauma, or

their new diagnosis, or their new life transition, whatever that may be. I wanted to make sure I was able to give them a space where they could do that."

Whayne, who has been around horses her whole life, says working with horses allows clients to talk about things they might not be able to address in a traditional setting.

"They let down those barriers that kept them from talking about the crisis, or the trauma, or the current behavior problem," she notes. "When we're working with the horses, something shifts, and they don't even realize their talking about it. They're able to have a safe place."

According to Whayne, horses connect well with people by sensing their nonverbal communication. Clients choose the horse

with which they feel compatible. They can opt to ride, or simply participate in "grounded" activities, like grooming.

Access is important to Whayne, who wanted to provide mental health services to people in her community who might otherwise have to travel significant distances to find it.

"That was a huge piece in the planning of this. We wanted to make sure that we offer our black and brown community members a safe place to talk about and improve their mental health," she says. "We want to let our community know we're here for every single community member who wants to improve their mental health."

In addition to serving clients from the facilities at the ranch, Whayne and her staff travel to

clients' homes, as well as schools and workplaces. They even have a small mobile office they take out into the community. OCES also hosts a camp during spring break for about 125 kids. In addition to developing their riding skills, participants focus on science, reading and exercise.

Although all of her work has a mental health focus, not every client has an official diagnosis.

"It can be a life transition. We all just went through COVID, so there are so many things that changed for so many people. They lost their job; they lost their home; they had to move in with family members. They had to learn how to restructure their lives," she says.

Although Whayne works with kids and adults, her favorite thing to do is family counseling.



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"I love working with the whole family because I understand that when you can get the adults in the space to be healed and to improve their mental health, it directly impacts the children, and vice versa. When you can get the children, it directly impacts the adults," she says. "I love working with families — children's dads and children's grandparents and children, whoever's in the home. I love to work with them as a collective."

OCES is also about family for Wayne and her own relatives, many of whom work for the company.

"My family has owned the ranch for over 40 years. My grandparents had it, and it was built from there. Now there are three generations that actually live there. We have a barn, an arena, a shop

area and a concession stand. We have all the things on site that we use. We already had the facility; we already had the tools. It was just a matter of taking the things we had — the horses, the ranch and my experience as a counselor — and combining those for our friends and the community," she says. "It's definitely a family affair. Together, we are just trying to give our community a place to heal and improve their mental health, and it's been a joy to be able to do that." **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.



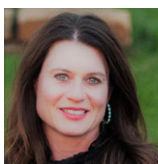
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Stacy Strow:

Encouraging an Exceptional Educational Experience

By **Nancy A. Moore**



WHEN WE ASKED followers on our Facebook page to comment on “Why I love my kid’s school,” we received a lot of feedback, including several comments specifically about Stacy Strow, principal at Wolf Creek Elementary in Broken Arrow, who has created an outstanding culture at the school. Read on to learn more about Stacy, her advice for those considering a career in education as well tips for parents to help their kids have a great school year.

TK: What made you decide to pursue a career in education?

Stacy: I knew from a very early age that I wanted to be a teacher. As I got older, I realized that I would be able to make a bigger impact going into administration, so that is what I set my sights on. I knew I wanted to be a principal when I graduated with my bachelor’s. My dream job was and still is being a principal at an elementary school. I just completed my 18th year as a principal.

TK: What advice would you give to people who are considering a career in education?

Stacy: It is not an easy career, but I believe it is one of the most rewarding career choices a person can make. It’s about building relationships, being consistent and showing up with a positive attitude.

TK: What do you know now that you wish you would have known right out of college?

Stacy: I wish I would have known how much the kids would impact me. Through the years, the kids have taught me so much, including: how to be a better teacher, how to be a better a principal and how to be a better mother to my own children. They just made me strive to be better overall!

TK: Do you have a favorite quote? If so, what is it and why is it a favorite?

Stacy: It is not a quote, but a story. Early in my career, a former principal gave me a little card with the story on it. It’s about a boy walking along the sea throwing the starfish back into the water. A man asked why he would bother because there were miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish on the shore, and

there was no way he could save them all. The boy simply answers, as he tosses another starfish back into the sea, “It made a difference to that starfish.”

To me, that is what it is all about. As an educator, if I am able to make a difference to even just one child, then my day was purposeful.

TK: Where did your Mission Statement originate? Why do you think it’s important for an educational institution to have one in place?

Mission Statement: Wolf Creek Tigers Will Develop a Safe Community to Promote Learning, Love and Relationships through Teamwork and Respect.

Stacy: Our entire staff created this mission statement. Once a month, BA has a distance learning day so our staff can collaborate, and we can attend professional training. This came out of an exercise our staff did on one of those days.

It is important because it puts all of us on the same page — this is what we are trying to accomplish.

“It is not an easy career, but I believe it is one of the **most rewarding** career choices a person can make. It’s about **building relationships, being consistent** and showing up with a **positive attitude.**”



Stacy Strow poses with a student at **Wolf Creek Elementary** in Broken Arrow.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY IAN UPTON.



These are the things that are important to us: a safe environment where all students can learn; an environment where kindness is valued; the kids and adults know they are cared for; they matter/they are valued.

We feel it is important to learn how to work in a team and learn how to interact/live with others who are different from us or think differently from us. We have to learn how to work together; this is something that is taught.

TK: We've heard that you know every student's name. What's your secret for remembering all those names?

Stacy: The only way to do something well is to practice. At the beginning of each year, I go from class to class with my counselor, and we play the name game. The name game is where I just say each student's name one-by-one. If I learn their name in kindergarten, I usually just need a quick refresher from that year on, so I just have to learn the new kiddos in first through fifth.

The students really enjoy it. By second grade, they know what I am doing when I enter the room at the beginning of the year. The students will cover their name tags, twins love to try and trick me; it's a great way to start the year. As new kids move in during the year, I just ask them every day until I learn it. I also feel like it is a model for the kids — if you want to do something and do it well, it takes practice.

TK: Why is it important for you to know everybody's name?

Stacy: First and foremost, it helps me keep the kids safe if I know who they are and who they belong to. I also want the kids to know that I genuinely care about them — I value them as a person

and I want to know their name, their family and their interests. I want students to know their school is a safe place to be. I also want them to feel proud that they go to Wolf Creek. It means something to be a Wolf Creek/Broken Arrow Tiger.

TK: As the school year kicks off, what advice do you have for parents to start the year off on the right foot?

Stacy: Go to the school, meet the teachers, meet the staff and find out how communication is going to take place. I am talking about two-way communication. Find out how the school/teacher is going to communicate with parents and how parents can best communicate with the teacher/school. Two-way communication is important because relationships start to form and then trust can be built. Students have the most success when the team at school and the parents at home are on the same team.

TK: Wrap-up: What else would you like to share?

Stacy: I have a pet turtle named Squirt that has been with me for 31 years. She has sat in a tank either in my classroom, the main office or the main hallway at five different schools. She stays the year in the tank and then vacations during the summer at our house in a koi pond. **TK**

If you'd like to hear more from Stacy, including how she fosters a community of love and support for students at the school, check out the Sharing Passion and Purpose Podcast: 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.

OHCA Urges SoonerCare Members to Check Their Accounts

By Staff

THE OKLAHOMA HEALTH

Care Authority (OHCA) is encouraging Oklahomans affected by the return of eligibility renewals to check their SoonerCare accounts to make sure their information is current. It's possible that some individuals are still eligible but may be disenrolled due to missing information or incomplete applications.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, routine SoonerCare eligibility renewals were paused as part of the Public Health Emergency (PHE). Medicaid agencies were required to continue health care coverage for members, even if their eligibility changed. This means members could continue being covered by SoonerCare during the PHE, even if they no longer qualified. Now that the public health emergency is over, states are required to review their Medicaid accounts and remove individuals who are no longer

eligible or have not updated their information or those who have incomplete information.

"We need people to log into their accounts and make sure all the information is up to date," said Emily Long, public information officer with OHCA. "We've been doing outreach to get members to update information and to get all their documentation correct by logging on to mysoonercare.org or by calling the helpline at 800.987.7767."

A procedural denial of service may be due to missing information or because a person has not completed the renewal process.

SoonerCare is the Oklahoma Medicaid program that provides health care coverage to 1 in 3 Oklahomans. It is administered by OHCA. People who are eligible include low-income adults, children, pregnant women and people with disabilities. Expanded pregnancy services include an increased income

threshold and 12 months of postpartum care. Doula services have also been added. Services for children cover a wide range of healthcare resources, including wellness visits, specialty care when needed, hospital stays, prescription medication, dental and mental health care. For eligibility requirements and a complete list of services, go to mysoonercare.org.

The review process began at the end of April and will continue through the end of the year. "This is taking place in phases," Long said. "OHCA developed a risk-based approach for prioritizing members through the unwinding process with the goal of protecting our most vulnerable members." Members who are identified as the most vulnerable throughout the process will be the last to be reviewed.

"We want to ensure that Oklahomans who need health care coverage and services receive

It's possible that some individuals are still eligible but may be disenrolled due to missing information or incomplete applications.

People who are eligible include low-income adults, children, pregnant women and people with disabilities.

it," Long said. "SoonerCare can give people peace of mind, knowing they can get treatment without worrying about cost. We are asking all parents who are still members or who have recently been members to confirm enrollment and renewal dates."

People who have been disenrolled but are still eligible can have their coverage backdated within 90 days. Those who find they're no longer eligible can get referrals to other resources to help them get health care coverage.

Long urges current members to log in and check their accounts to make sure they are complete and current. Renewal is a simple step-by-step process. For new enrollees, or for those who are unsure if they are eligible, Long says to go through the process on mysoonercare.org. They can find out if they are eligible the same day. Representatives are also available to help at 800.987.7767. **TK**



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PJ'S CORNER

Pediatric Eating Disorders



Q & A WITH

Dr. Scott Moseman, M.D., CEDS

MEDICAL DIRECTOR OF LAUREATE PSYCHIATRIC CLINIC AND
HOSPITAL'S EATING DISORDERS PROGRAM

Q: Can you define pediatric eating disorder for us, and then talk about some of the most common types?

A: Eating disorders are really stress and anxiety disorders in which the individual chooses to utilize the manipulation of food to try to take care of themselves and to try to feel in more control. Anorexia nervosa usually strikes around menarche in females, and sometimes in early teens for males.

Especially in females, hormones that come with puberty make depression, anxiety and eating issues more common. But we can see eating issues in kids, especially in pediatric obesity.

Another illness called Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder, or ARFID, may affect a subsection of kids, particularly young kids, who are basically extreme picky eaters. Kids with ARFID, usually together with sensory issues and some stress or anxiety issues, limit their food, sometimes to only four or five things. Those foods may not have the full nutrients that the patient needs, resulting in further complications. Some patients will develop other eating disorders as they get older. Some patients' sensitivities will decrease, and they will sort of grow out of those illnesses. But they are illnesses that need treatment. ARFID is probably more common before the teenage years, where eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia are more common during the teenage years.

Q: How common are eating disorders?

A: Rates of anorexia are still about 1 percent in females. Eating disorders in general affect 3-5 percent of people.

Q: What are the treatments for adolescent eating disorders?

A: At the Laureate Eating Disorders program, we're fortunate to have one of the longest-running treatment programs in the country, and a not-for-profit

treatment program. We have inpatient and outpatient services available. Like any other illness, the goal is to treat it with the right amount of intervention. All eating disorders are not equal in severity. With anorexia, you have to make sure the brain and body are nourished. If they aren't nourished, the patient's head doesn't work as well, therapies don't work as well, and the brain has a harder time thinking. After providing nourishment, then you treat the underlying anxiety.

Bulimia, or binge-eating, tends to be impulsive. Patients feel anxious, but their goal tends to be how to make themselves feel better as soon as possible.

The key with both illnesses is treating the person's anxiety while maintaining their nutrition and not doing things that make them feel worse over time.

Q: What signs and symptoms should parents be looking for? If they are concerned, what should they do?

A: Take an active part in your kids' lives. As they become teenagers, it's important to be around and available. The loss of the family meal is really a loss for us as a society. Sit down together. Ask about their day. Notice changes in dress, weight, skin tone, and the ability to eat. Keep up with your pediatrician appointments. Are your kids eating with you or eating privately? Sometimes with bulimia, weight can stay the same, or possibly even go up a tiny bit. So, be aware of eating attitudes and behaviors. Are they talking a lot about their body, the way they look and being unsure about that?

Q: And if you do have a problem?

A: We have a full compendium of resources here at the Laureate Eating Disorders program. There are several excellent people in the community. Oklahoma is lucky to have a treatment center with a lot of professionals who are very adept at treating eating disorders.

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

Laureate Eating Disorders Program information: 800-322-5173
saintfrancis.com/laureate

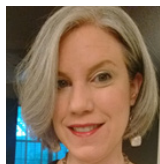


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Storytime for Schooltime: Back-to-School Books!

By **Laura Raphael, MA, MLIS**

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COORDINATOR
TULSA CITY-COUNTY LIBRARY



"Get your young ones ready for the first day of school with these books that cover the first-time school scares, the transitions from pre-K to kindergarten and other common school-related excitements and anxieties."

Calm First-Day Qualms and Master School Transitions with Aplomb

WHETHER YOUR LITTLE

ones are venturing into the classroom for the first time this fall or they've done it a few times — or you are trying to make your home school a little more "school" — you'll appreciate this list from Leah Weyand, Tulsa City-County Library's Youth Fiction Selector.

She writes: "Get your young ones ready for the first day of school with these books that cover the first-time school scares, the transitions from pre-K to kindergarten and other common school-related excitements and anxieties."

Find this list — with links! — on the library's website (tulsalibrary.org). Select "List" from the drop-down menu and search "Back To School for Littles & Children" for this list and then click on "TCCL Youth_Fiction" for more book

goodies from Leah and her fellow Collections librarians.

The Brilliant Ms. Bangle, written by Cara Devins and illustrated by K-Fai Steele

It's tough when a beloved teacher or librarian leaves and a new person steps in. In this story, the beloved librarian has retired — and Ms. Bangle has taken her place, with new ways of doing things. Children aren't convinced right away, but pretty soon, they see that change is good, and their new librarian is brilliant indeed!

Back To School Backpack! written by Simon Rich and illustrated by Tom Toro

If you watch *Saturday Night Live*, you might be familiar with writer Simon Rich's weird worlds — if you don't, get ready! In this perspective-shifting tale, the backpack expresses its anxieties of being new and starting school.

First-day-of-school jitters were never so funny!

Our Classroom Rules! written by Kallie George and illustrated by Jay Fleck

Rules aren't usually cool or exciting, but when something *rules*, they can be. In this story, classroom rules make the day go smoother and learning more fun. The illustrations of different animals getting along are especially energetic and add a layer of exuberance to the reading experience.

Ready for Kindergarten, written by Bethany Freitas and illustrated by Maja Anderson

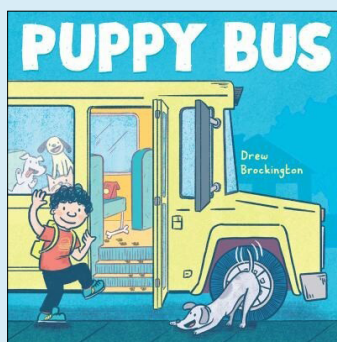
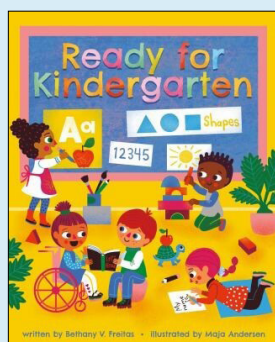
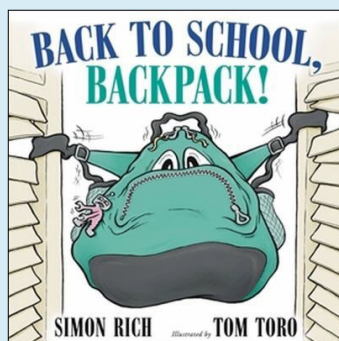
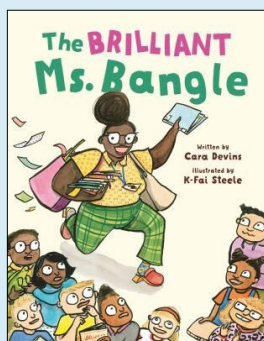
Get some great ideas for activities to do with your kindergartener in this lively call-and-response book. Reading this over and over before school begins will help calm some qualms and ease your young one into what makes school fun.

Puppy Bus, written and illustrated by Drew Brockington

Who *wouldn't* want to get on a PUPPY BUS and go to PUPPY SCHOOL? (Where do I sign up?) Instead of getting on his regular school bus, a young boy gets paws-ively re-routed with a troop of puppies just waiting to show him how packed their school days are.

The New Kid Welcome, written by Suzanne Slade and illustrated by Nicole Miles

This unique "flip" book tells the same story forward and backward and gives young readers the choice of freezing out someone different on the first day of school — or being welcoming and warm. A terrific way to introduce a conversation about the different kinds of people your child may encounter at school and how to handle moral questions of treating others with kindness.



Told from the perspective of a student, *The New Kid Welcome* (or *Welcome the New Kid* when flipped) presents readers with two versions of what happens when a “new kid” joins the protagonist’s school.

It isn’t easy to say hi to someone new, is it?

In the first half of the book, the student tells us that they don’t want to be nice to the new kid or welcome them into their group simply because they seem different. In the second half, the same lines of the story are placed in reverse order. When read this way, the student encourages us to say hello to someone new, saying they will share their table and snacks.

With a simple flip of the story, feelings of intolerance give way to those of inclusion and kindness. Precise, thoughtful text and

inclusive illustrations combine to create a perfect tool for promoting acceptance and a kinder world.

When read forward and backward, this clever and thought-provoking flip-it story demonstrates that there’s more than one way to think about someone who might seem “different” at first glance.

After all...

It is easy to say hi to someone new, isn’t it?

School Is Wherever I Am, written and illustrated by Ellie Peterson

Learning doesn’t just happen between the walls of a school! An inspiring look at how “school” can be much grander, larger and more wonderful than originally imagined. **TK**

OTHER BOOKS ON LEAH’S LIST TO CHECK OUT:

I Am Ready for School! by Stephen Krensky

Welcome Back! By Alexandra Penfold

This Is My Home, This Is My School by Jonathan Bean

A Day at School with The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Megan Roth

And Then Comes School by Tom Brenner

The World’s Best Class Plant by Liz Garton Scanlon

The Crayons Go Back To School by Drew Daywalt

Hurry, Little Tortoise, Time for School! by Carrie Finison

Kindergarten: Where Kindness Matters Every Day by Vera Ahijya

Not Yet, Yeti by Bethany Freitas

Choo Choo School by Amy Krouse Rosenthal

Llama Llama Back To School by Anna Dewdney

The Queen of Kindergarten by Derrick Barnes

This Is a School by John Schu

Lunchbox Challenge:

20 Ways to Feed Your Kid

By **Natalie Mikles**



IN SEPTEMBER THE kids' lunchboxes are still clean, no one has yet lost their new water bottles and there are few complaints about lunch.

Overachieving and fun parents might be coordinating their kids' lunches by color or theme. And even us regular parents are taking the time to cut the sandwiches into triangles and pack homemade cookies. By May we'll laugh at this fresh-faced naivete.

But for now, here are ideas to take you through the first few weeks of school. Some of them are basic or obvious, but when you're in a rut, you'll be glad to have this list. Hang on to it or stick it on the refrigerator when you need a mental boost. If you have older kids, let them take a look so they can make lunch for themselves!

One Month of Lunch Ideas or 20 Ways to Pack a Lunch

1 TROPICAL SMOOTHIE

Smoothies are a great way to sneak greens into the diets of picky kids. Most kids will love this sweet tropical smoothie. Blend 1 cup frozen pineapple, 1 cup strawberries, 3 cups loosely packed baby spinach, 1 frozen banana and 1 ½ cups coconut water. Pack in a thermos with a straw.

2 TEX-MEX RICE BOWL

Layer a container with brown rice, shredded cheese, pinto beans, veggies and salsa. Let them mix it up and eat with a fork or as a dip with tortilla chips.

3 AVOCADO WHIP DIP

In a blender, mix 1 ripe avocado (peeled and pitted) with ½ cup plain yogurt and 1 tablespoon lime juice. Pack as a dip with veggies or spread on whole-wheat pita or crackers.

4 EASY HAM ROLLUP

MAKES 1 SERVING

- 1 tortilla
- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- Salt and pepper
- 2 slices ham
- 2 slices thin-sliced cheese
- Arugula (if they'll eat it!)

1. Lay tortilla flat.
2. In a small bowl, combine mayo, mustard and salt and pepper, to taste. Spread on tortilla. Lay ham and cheese on top. Add arugula. Wrap tightly, tucking in ham, cheese and lettuce as you go. Wrap in plastic wrap, then refrigerate overnight.
3. Cut into 1-inch rounds, and place in lunchbox. Fun to pack with chopsticks!

5 TURKEY AND CHEESE MINI BAGEL

When you're out of (or tired of) sandwich bread, make a sandwich on a mini bagel. Smear with plain cream cheese. Add turkey, cheese and sliced pickles.

6 MINI CHARCUTERIE BOARD

Make a portable cheese board with wedges of Brie (or a soft-spread cheese like Laughing Cow), crackers, grapes, strawberries, baby carrots and nuts.

7 RANCH PASTA SALAD

Combine cooked seashell pasta with peas, shredded carrots, cheddar cheese cubes and crumbled bacon with ranch dressing for this salad that's a nice change of pace from a sandwich.

8 CHILI CHEESE BAKED POTATO

This is an especially good one for middle schoolers. If they have access to a microwave, even better. Top a potato or sweet potato with cheese, sour cream or steamed veggies for a filling lunch. For kids with big appetites, pile on the protein — bacon or chili are both great.



9 QUINOA CHICKEN SALAD

Roughly chop some pieces of leftover chicken or rotisserie chicken and add to cooked quinoa. Drizzle with your kiddo's favorite salad dressing. Add cheese, veggies or nuts for crunch and flavor.

10 BLUEBERRY BANANA SMOOTHIE BOWL

MAKES 3 SERVINGS

- 1 banana, cut into chunks
 - 1 cup frozen blueberries
 - 1 cup apple juice
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup vanilla yogurt
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup crushed ice
 - Sprinkle of cinnamon
 - 1 cup granola
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dried blueberries
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup banana chips
1. In a blender combine banana, blueberries, apple juice, yogurt, ice and cinnamon. Blend 30 seconds or until smooth. Divide smoothie into three containers that will stay cool.
 2. In three separate containers, pack granola, dried blueberries and banana chips. Before serving, pour smoothie mixture over granola mixture.

11 PEANUT BUTTER PITAS

When a plain old PB&J is getting boring, slice open pita bread to make a pocket, then smear the inside with crunchy peanut butter and stuff with thinly sliced apples. It makes a delicious sandwich!

12 LUNCH EGGS AND TOAST

Here's a fun twist on a breakfast favorite. Wrap toasted bread in parchment (let it cool first so it won't be soggy). Include little restaurant condiment packages of butter or jelly. Pack hard-boiled eggs to go with it.

13 PESTO OR PARMESAN TORTELLINI

Boil a bag of frozen cheese tortellini. While warm, toss with pesto. For kids who aren't into green, toss the tortellini with a little butter and parmesan. This one is a favorite for kids from toddlers to teens.

14 YOU DIP, I DIP, WE DIP

Kids will love an "all dip" lunch. Pack pretzels, chips, carrot sticks or any favorite dipping tool. Then fill several small containers with different dips — salsa, bean dip, plain yogurt, ranch dressing.

15 LUNCHBOX BANANA BREAD

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
 - 1 stick butter, softened
 - 2 eggs
 - 2 bananas, mashed (about 1 cup)
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
1. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour three mini loaf pans; set aside.
 2. Combine sugar and butter in bowl. Beat at medium speed, scraping bowl often, until creamy. Add eggs, beating until well mixed. Add bananas and vanilla, beating at low speed until well mixed. Stir in all remaining ingredients.
 3. Spoon batter into pans. Bake 33-38 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Let stand 5 minutes; remove from pans. Cool completely.

16 MINI PEPPER PIZZAS

Quarter a bell pepper. Spread with a thin layer of pizza sauce, mozzarella cheese and mini pepperoni. Place on a baking sheet and bake for 10 minutes at 350 degrees. A great gluten-free pizza option.

17 KIDS' KABOBS

Your kids will love discovering lunch on a skewer. The options are endless here, but some delicious and fun examples include skewers of pepperoni, mozzarella and black olives, a kabob of cantaloupe, ham and cheddar cheese, or grapes, turkey and cherry tomatoes.

18 PANCAKE BITES

Here's a good one for preschoolers. Cut pancakes with a pizza cutter to make small pancake bites. Kids can pick them up with their hands and dip them in a little maple syrup or apple butter.

19 HOMEMADE UNCRUSTABLES

It's super easy to make your own version of this treat. Make a PB&J as usual, then use a cookie cutter to make a shape, leaving the crust behind. Heart, flowers or circles are all good choices for the best ratio. Gently push down the edges of the sandwich, then freeze. Wrap tightly, storing in the freezer until ready to use. Then pack in the lunchbox frozen, and the sandwich will thaw by lunchtime.

20 BBQ CHICKEN TAQUITOS

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

- 1 cup cooked, shredded chicken breast
 - 3 tablespoons barbecue sauce
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shredded cheddar cheese
 - 4 flour tortillas
1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Combine chicken, barbecue sauce and cheese in bowl.
 2. Spoon chicken evenly into four tortillas. Roll tightly, and place seam-side down on baking sheet. Bake 15-20 minutes until golden brown.
 3. Cut in half and place in a thermos to stay warm or roll tightly in foil. Kids also like them served cold with ranch dressing as a dip! **TK**

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



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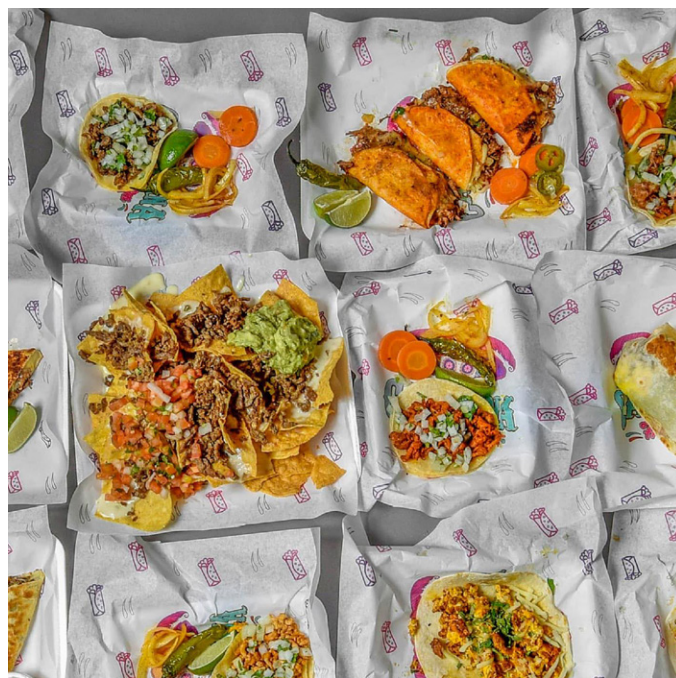
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JENKS

Written by Betty Casey



PHOTO BY JONATHAN COX VIA DISCOVER JENKS.

Jenks at a Glance

THE CITY OF JENKS was founded in 1905 and is named after railroad official Elmer E. Jenks. Initially a railroad settlement, the Glenn Pool oil field contributed to a population boom in 1906. An interesting fact about Jenks is that it is an Oklahoma Film Friendly Community, an initiative of the **Oklahoma Film + Music Office (OF+MO)**. The designation means that Jenks has participated in a three-step certification process, readying the town for film and television productions as well as promoting the community to the state's growing entertainment industry. In addition, **Jenks' downtown** is a popular destination for shoppers and was named the "Antique Capital of Oklahoma" by former first lady of Oklahoma Shirley Bellmon.

Jenks now has a brand-new designation: **The Ten District**. "The Ten" was founded in 2021 and refers to the city's 10-mile distance from Tulsa, Bixby, Sapulpa and Broken Arrow. The Ten District website says, "The Ten is the heartbeat of Jenks and expands exactly 10 blocks west of the Arkansas River until you hit the old Midland Valley railroad tracks," (thetendistrict.com). The Ten is working to strategically use established public-private partnerships, recruit and promote development, including retail and other business in Jenks, build partnerships for art projects as well as beautify the "hard" elements of the town such as benches, streetscaping and more. The Ten is honoring the past and building for the future.



Facts

Population, 2023: 27,766; Jenks is one of the fastest growing cities in Oklahoma.

16th largest city in Oklahoma

Average household income: \$115,032

Median age of population: 34.5 years

Rate of home ownership: 76.6%

Associate degree or higher: over 50%

Median household income (2021 census): \$91,798

Poverty rate: 8.52%

Unemployment rate: 4.4%

Citizens born in Jenks: 52.61%



PHOTO BY IAN UPTON.

Highlights & Activities

Oklahoma Aquarium: See underwater creatures up close, including bull sharks swimming overhead in the shark tunnel. View Oklahoma's freshwater natives like the prehistoric paddlefish or feed the turtles. Vibrant tropical fish float through the Polynesian Reef. Seahorses, jellyfish and black ghost knifefish can be found in Marvels and Mysteries. Sleepovers, S.T.E.M. events and more are always on the calendar.

Riverwalk Crossing: shops, restaurants, entertainment and activities

Antique shopping: Find collectibles and unique antiques at shops such as the River City Trading Post, Bird's Eye Treasures or the Windsor Market Antique mall. There are many, many places to browse and buy.

Jenks Planetarium: Jenks High School Campus. See planets, stars and galaxies up close on a 50-foot, high definition SciDome.

Maggie's Music Box for Live Music

Pinot's Palette

South Lakes Golf Course

Got Wood Axe Throwing Co.

Golf Suites

Miller Swim Jenks



Festivals & Events

Jenks Herb and Plant Festival: An Oklahoma tradition, Jenks' festival is in April each year and features over 100 booths for gardeners as well as food and entertainment.

Aquarium Run: Half marathon, 10K, 5K and 1-mile; April 6, 2024

Jenks America Food Truck Festival: 2024 TBA, but typically the first Sat. in May. The festival features food, music and fun on Jenks' Main Street

Jenks America Freedom Fest: Downtown on Independence Day. Live music, watermelon, BBQ and children's activities

Boomfest: Jenks' July 4 day-long celebration ending with a huge fireworks display at dusk

Sharklahoma: The Oklahoma Aquarium celebrates all things SHARK during the month of July.

Art on Main: Celebration of Oklahoma art, music and wine. Main Street in October

Jenks Half Marathon and 5K: September 1

Hometown Huddle: Pep rally and community block party event kicks off the Jenks High School Trojan football season in September. jenksfoundation.org

Trick-or-Treat on Main Street: Local businesses and vendors provide candy, games, shopping and family fun in downtown Jenks in late October.

Holiday Open House: Kicks off the Christmas season with, live music, entertainment, a Lights On ceremony and a Kiwanis Club Christmas Parade the following Saturday.





ABOVE: EMMIE WESTFALL (LEFT) WITH NEIGHBORHOOD FRIENDS, PAISLEY TYNDALL AND PENELOPE WINTERS. RIGHT: LIAM (LEFT), KYLE, EMMIE, COURTNEY AND BRODY WESTFALL POSE FOR A HOLIDAY PORTRAIT.

JENKS FAMILIES TELL US THEIR FAVORITE THINGS



The Westfall Family

COURTNEY WESTFALL and her husband, Kyle, have lived in Jenks for eight years. They have three children, Liam, 12, Brody, 10, and Emmie, 7, who all attend Jenks Public Schools. Courtney is a kindergarten teacher in her second year at Jenks West, which she says is “the best thing I’ve ever done. I love it!”

Courtney, who grew up in Tulsa, met Kyle in graduate school in Kentucky, where she informed him that they would be moving back to Tulsa. Courtney’s parents had moved back to Oklahoma from Colorado and purchased a house in Jenks. “Their neighbor put their house up for sale, and we ended up moving across the street from my parents,” Courtney said.

When they outgrew that house, the Westfalls moved around the corner. “I think there’s four of us that our parents also live in the neighborhood,” Courtney said. “I love that my kids can be that close to my parents. They’ll just walk down to their house.”

The neighborhood also has outdoor movie night, breakfast with Santa, a 4th of July parade and other

activities. “I love that people want to get to know their neighbors,” Courtney said. “They know you. They know your car. It’s fun. I like seeing the kids grow, graduate from high school, go to college, and it’s also fun to see new families with babies. And it’s safer when you know the neighbors around you.”

Courtney says she enjoys the small-town feel of Jenks, “especially the parades. They shut down Main Street for the Christmas parade and the Homecoming parade,” she says. “We have our own feel and vibe here.”

The Ten is an exciting new initiative that Courtney believes will continue to revive and build on what is currently happening in downtown Jenks. She feels that it will make Jenks more of a destination.

As a teacher and a Jenks Public School parent, Courtney has been happy with her kids’ education, their teachers and mentors. She also likes that her kids have had the opportunity to go to school with immigrants from Myanmar. Jenks has a large population of people from Myanmar.

Besides school activities, Courtney says Jenks offers everything they need to keep them busy, entertained and healthy. Liam enjoys tae kwon do at Jenks Martial Arts Academy. Brody is in band and was able to take lessons downtown. Emmie took piano lessons at school. The family enjoys going to downtown festivals. “We just went to Sharks in the Park. They had free hotdogs, fire fighters had their hoses out spraying kids. There were food trucks. It just felt so small town.”

They also enjoy going to Rustic Gate Creamery for ice cream and browsing in the Trading Post or buying gourmet popcorn and other fun items at Bridges Mercantile on Main, a shop that employs individuals with special needs.

Their health care professionals are all located in Jenks as well. “When I was growing up,” Courtney said, “it was a suburb. You had to drive to find the things you needed. It’s coming into its own.”



THE CALMUS FAMILY ENJOYS A BRANSON VACATION. FROM LEFT: RICHIE, AMY, COLT, BRECKEN AND JETT.

The Calmus Family

AMY AND RICHIE CALMUS are Jenks “lifers,” having been born there and now raising their three children, Jett, a high school senior, Brecken, a sophomore, and Colt, a seventh grader, in the community.

“I like Jenks because it’s a town with a great community feel,” Amy says. “A lot of people like us leave and come back. Our children are attending school with a lot of our friends’ kids. It has a small-town feel, but it’s not a small town.”

She feels that her children have benefitted from their educational opportunities in Jenks Public Schools. While the high school is large, Amy says, “You can get plugged in very easily” through a variety of activities and sports. Jett plays football and baseball and is vice president of FCA.

“The high school has college and career counselors and an internship program,” she says. “They have so many options to prepare them for the future.”

She says the school system has grown and the facilities are amazing.

The family also takes advantage of the festivals and events in downtown Jenks.

“People line the streets for the Homecoming Parade,” Amy says. “The band enters first, and you can hear them coming. Everything associated with the school can be involved. It’s very inclusive.”

Some of the other things that they enjoy is sitting outside Rustic Gate Creamery on Main Street, eating ice cream or stopping at Payton’s Corner, a family-owned gas station and food shop close to Jenks West Elementary School. When the kids were younger, she said, they liked Veterans Park, which now has a splash pad.

As a lifer, Amy has seen a lot of changes in Jenks over time, and she feels that they are all positive. “There are more opportunities for our family,” she says. “We love giving back to Jenks—we prefer going to Jenks’ small businesses to shop.”

She mentioned The Ten District’s investment in the Jenks’ community with new retail, housing, restaurants and shops. “They promote Jenks Excellence,” she says.

“We love that our kids can be involved in athletics and activities that make them better people,” Amy says. “We love Jenks. That is who we are.”



ABOVE: JENKS RIVERWALK; TOP RIGHT: JOSH’S SNO SHACK JENKS; BELOW: OKLAHOMA AQUARIUM; BOTTOM RIGHT: SIDECAR BARLEY & WINE BAR JENKS. PHOTOS BY IAN UPTON.





From our Facebook FRIENDS

WE ASKED TULSAKIDS FACEBOOK FRIENDS TO TELL US WHAT ABOUT
WHAT THEY LIKE TO DO IN JENKS. HERE'S WHAT THEY SAID:

"For the family, brunch at **Hatch Early Mood Food**. Stroll through **River City Trading Post** for unique finds. For adults, shop for home decor at **LIV'D** and **Platinum Style Interiors**. Drinks and apps on the patio at **Sidecar Barley & Wine Bar**."

LEAH F.H.

"Trick or Treat on Main Street! I know it's seasonal, but we go every year and it's so fun."

VANESSA B.

"We love the **Aquarium**, **Veterans Park** for play time and the splash pad. We also love to eat dinner at **Campasino's** and walk down to **Rustic Gate** for ice cream or pineapple whip after dinner! The girls also love to stop and take pictures with the animal statues at the garden center on Main! Something else that is random, is I love driving around and seeing all the pastures and open space, and you can also go to the viewing deck at **Jones Airport** and watch planes land and take off."

HEATHER C.

"**Aquarium**, **Veterans Park**, **Josh's Sno Shack**, the awesome library, and, strangely, my kids get a big kick out of going through the automatic car wash."

KRISTIN R.

"**Veterans park!** Great playground and splash park."

CAREY J.P.

"**Rustic Gate Creamery** is our favorite ice cream spot!"

MEGAN N.B.

"**Aquarium**, of course. **Rustic Gate** is great; so is **Louie's** and **Los Cabos**. **Mojo's Mercantile** for coffee and Italian ices!...**Cape Brewing** and **George's Pub** are both family friendly; then, of course, the **Trading Post!**"

DORI S.

"Get some kettlecorn or a cookie from up by the register and walk around **River City Trading Post**."

CASEY T.

"**Marble Slab Creamery & Great American Cookies** for ice cream and walk along the **Riverwalk**. Play with Lime scooter and bicycle."

ALBERT S.

"All the antique shops."

J'DANNA J.

"**Cookie Doodle** or **Rustic Gate** for a treat. **Aquarium**. **Planetarium**, Dinner at **Los Mariachis**."

SARAH K.

"In the spring the plant and herb festival. **Veterans Park** is always a hit with the kids, especially with the new splash pad."

JENNIFER R.

"**Veterans Park**. **Josh's Sno Shack**. **River City Trading Post**, give kiddo \$20 and see what they buy. **Catrina [Fresh Mex]** for tacos."

SHANNON W.

"**Aquarium** and family bike ride night with **City Cycles!**"


BRETT M.

"Shop around **River City Trading Post**."

DANAE A.

"**Bridges Mercantile** classes and shopping!"

KRISTIN H.W.



Frank and Arianna
met in preschool and
have continued their
friendship through
their elementary school
years at Emerson.

PARENTS CAN HELP
TEACH CHILDREN TO BE

G O O D F R I E N D S

COVER FEATURE • BY NATALIE MIKLES
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREA MURPHY

WHEN MY CHILDREN were preschoolers, a poster with two owls snuggled on a swing set hung on our playroom wall. It read: To have a friend, you must be a friend.

Every now and then we talked about that saying. When I saw one of my twins leaving the other out in a game or watched them ignore their little brother, I would remind them of the owl poster. "Are you being a good friend?" I would ask. "If you want your brother to be nice to you, you have to be nice to him."

It's such a simple thing. But not so simple for kids and, let's be honest, not always so simple for adults. It takes practice to learn how to be a good friend. Unfortunately, that often means getting your feelings hurt or feeling the sting of rejection before children start to understand the consequences of social behavior.

Navigating young children's friendships can be as easy as pointing to a poster or a family rule. But as children grow, so do the complexities of friendships, of choosing good friends and knowing when to back away from unhealthy friendships.

The elementary school years are ripe with possibility. It's a time when children go from having pals to having confidantes. They learn who they can trust, who they can laugh with and who they might need to steer clear of to avoid getting in trouble. These can be hard years for making and keeping friends, but it's important groundwork for the deeper connections of middle school and high school friendships.

We talked to Tulsa mom Shelly Brown and her 9-year-old son, Frank, about elementary school friendships.

"I think the most important thing we can do as parents for our children is talk to them about their friendships and what our kids think it means to be a good friend—and help define what makes a good friend for them," Shelly said.

For Frank, those good friend qualities are ones he's found in his longtime friend, Arianna. So, what makes her a good friend?

"She's very nice and funny and playful and forgiving," Frank said.

And in return, Frank has been nice and playful and forgiving right back.

But even at 9 years old, Arianna has been more than just someone to play with on the playground. When Frank's grandfather died, he said, Arianna was there for him.

Shelly said one thing parents can do to help their kids is highlight their strong points so they can know how to use them with their peers.

"Frank is a strong leader. We remind him how important his influence can be with his friends and how he can use this strong point to help include others that may not have an easy time making new friends," she said.

**These can be hard
years for making
and keeping friends,
but it's important
groundwork for the
deeper connections of
middle school and high
school friendships.**

Another lesson she teaches Frank is remembering that part of being a good friend is recognizing each person has something different to bring to the friendship.

Shelly said that while Frank hasn't yet hit any major problems in the friendship realm, she works to see situations through Frank's eyes, listening to him in open conversation so that he can speak freely, and she can listen.

"It's important to understand our children's perspective so we can better provide them with tools to navigate different friendships," she said.

Before kids enter the tricky pre-teen and teen years is also a good time to discuss, and perhaps role-play, situations that may arise.

"This is a great time to talk about relationship boundaries," Shelly said. "Helping children establish a good foundation about healthy boundaries in all types of relationships will be something they can carry throughout their lives."

Talking to her son about friendships has come naturally to Shelly Brown, but that's not the case with many parents.

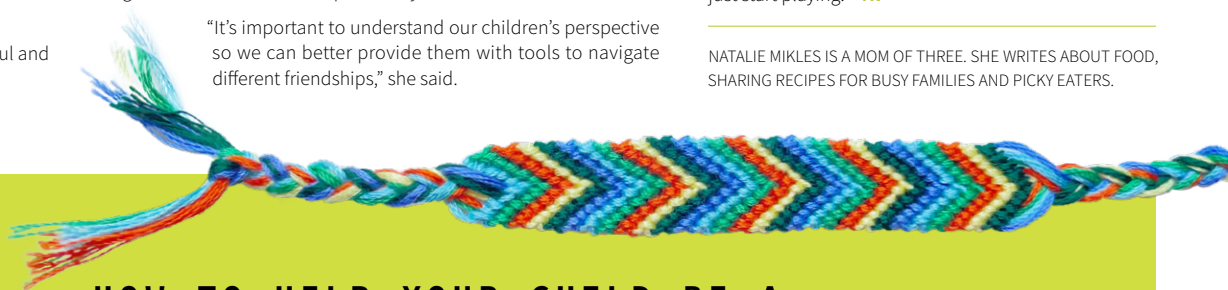
Some parents may see a child's peer relationships as something they have little control over. But according to the American Psychological Association (APA), parents have a tremendous influence in helping children develop healthy friendships and relationships. That starts with giving them tools to set them up for success.

For parents of preschoolers, that begins with reminders about how to be a good friend through sharing and taking turns. For elementary-aged kids, it's frequent talks about what kindness looks like. For example, reminding your child to sit by someone who is alone at lunch or to play with a new student at recess.

The APA recognizes the struggle that is middle school, with a finding that most kids will experience bullying by their peers at some point in these years. Children who have developed good friendship skills in elementary school can pull out those tools, remembering to be trustworthy and kind rather than trying too hard to be cool. But not many get out of middle school unscathed. Continuing those preschool and elementary school discussions of how to be a good friend and how to look for a good friend is as critical in these years as when kids are first learning the meaning of friendship as preschoolers.

The beginning of the school year can be a good time to jump-start or refresh talks about being a good friend. Frank's advice to making friends in the new school year: "You don't even have to say, 'Can we be friends?' You can just start playing." **TK**

NATALIE MIKLES IS A MOM OF THREE. SHE WRITES ABOUT FOOD, SHARING RECIPES FOR BUSY FAMILIES AND PICKY EATERS.



HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD BE A

G O O D F R I E N D

TALK ABOUT IT.

A great tip from the PBS Parents app is to help kids draw the connection between their kind or cooperative behavior and friendship. For instance, "I noticed you sat by your friend when she was feeling upset. You are a good friend!" For little children, remind them of the Daniel Tiger song, "Friends help each other. Yes, they do, it's true."

But even for older children, reminding them of their goodness and how they can channel it into their friendships will give them the confidence to make friends and maintain friendships.

SCHEDULE PLAYDATES.

If you're an introverted parent, this may sound like a nightmare. "Can't they just play with their friends at school?" you might be thinking. But playdates allow kids to have fun with parents nearby. Even though you may be talking with another parent, you can still keep an eye on the kids to see how your child gets along with others. Playdates make space for young children to practice being a friend through sharing and taking turns. For older kids, it's an opportunity to get to know each other better and establish familiarity.

OFFER SUPPORT.

You know your child better than anyone. Watching him struggle to jump in and play with others at a playground or birthday party can be heartbreaking. Talk about it the next time it comes around, reminding him what he can do to interject himself. Role-play with them. For young children, it's OK to step in, helping a child find a spot at the sandbox or swings. Likewise, talk to extroverted children about looking out for those who are quiet or unsure. Remind them how they can use their big, wonderful personalities to welcome in new friends.



THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

BY TARA RITTLER

IF YOU'VE EVER found motherhood to be a lonely experience, you're — ironically — not alone. A 2021 article by the Harvard Graduate School of Education stated that 51% of mothers with young children reported serious loneliness.

Multiple factors can contribute to this sense of isolation. According to an article by ParentMap, some key reasons moms may feel lonely include:

- bearing a heavy mental load
- mistaking the superficial connectedness of social media for genuine connectedness
- juggling unique situations like single parenting or raising kids with disabilities
- dealing with multiple life changes
- being under a lot of pressure

If you're feeling lonely — or just want to make some new friends for the fun of it! — here are some creative ways local moms have connected with their parenting peers.

BOND OVER BOOKS

Vanessa Self, whose five children are currently 9, 11, 13, 14 and 22, moved to Tulsa in 2020 — just in time for the pandemic.

"I knew it would be really challenging to make new friends," she says. "A book club offered a perfect solution because we could interact online or in person."

Self had participated in book clubs before, joining her first when her youngest child was 2. "Reading the same book provides a shared experience that, over time, can be a very bonding experience," she explains. "It's a neat way to gather with people who have at least one thing in common — we like to read, and we like to learn!"

Self's current book club meets monthly, and members take turns hosting and choosing books. Occasionally, they'll meet at a coffee shop, restaurant or other public

space. While kids typically stay at home, the book club members will sometimes have family events outside of the monthly gathering.

For moms interested in starting their own book club, Self cautions, "It's not always easy, and you do have to have self-confidence — people are busy and have lots to pull at their attention — some level of rejection and times of low participation/low response are inevitable."

To minimize this, she suggests bringing people together who don't necessarily know each other but are connected in some way. Set ground rules and a plan of action from the get-go and agree to share hosting responsibilities.

"If it stops feeling alive and fresh," Self says, "let it take a break or even let it go and try again with another group — either on your own or join an existing group, for example, one through the public library."

GET INVOLVED AT SCHOOL

"Real-life mom friends" Amber S. and Nancy C. both have 10-year-olds at Mayo Demonstration School. For them, nothing beats volunteering at your child's school when it comes to connecting with other parents.

Beyond building parent-to-parent connections, they say, volunteering provides the "magical" experience of watching your child's friends "grow from tiny pre-K kiddos into bright and creative pre-teens." Plus, they feel that getting to know the other families is beneficial for their children's safety and for navigating potential conflict or challenges.

Amber's volunteer efforts have included chaperoning field trips, working at the used uniform sale, giving a dog safety talk to her child's class and attending fundraising events. Nancy has been involved with the PTA, served on the Mayo Foundation Board and led Mayo's annual trivia night fundraiser.

More than likely, there is a variety of volunteer opportunities at your child's school. Some require more time

commitment than others, and some may be a better fit for your personality.

"I'm a total introvert," Nancy says, "So I have searched out opportunities for connection in smaller groups. I've also considered the need: While I may not have wanted to work the book fair, I sure loved the school librarian asking for volunteers, and I knew someone would need to step up."

Besides volunteering, there are other meaningful ways to connect with families at your child's school that require less of a time commitment.

"From my child's pre-K year up until COVID hit," Amber says, "Each time I dropped her off at school, I would walk her inside and wait with her until the bell rang. This simple act of spending 10-15 minutes each morning getting face-to-face time with other parents and Mayo kids really facilitated my future involvement at the school because it promoted a sense of community and a feeling of being welcomed into the school."

She also used social media to invite Mayo parents to her home for small gatherings.

"I knew that I needed to begin building connections with the parents and kids in my child's class if I was going to be able to entrust my child to their care in later years, when children are more apt to want to have play dates and slumber parties," she explains.

Nancy concurs. "Showing up is usually all it takes," she says. "Whether it's the Fall Festival, the uniform sale, back-to-school night, etc., as I'd see the same faces over and over, even this introvert felt comfortable to start up conversations with other parents."

They both agree that "Making friends as an adult is really hard. If there's a parent (mom or dad) reading this who feels isolated or lacking that community connection, getting involved in your child's public school is a great place to start!"

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TECHNOLOGY — WHATSAPP FOR THE WIN

Following the birth of her twins, now age 5, Yuly Benton immediately recognized the importance of having a support system. However, with no family nearby, building that support system took some effort.

"Having the support of a community provides resources, ideas and helps to make the mother's life easier as we navigate the hurdles of parenthood," Benton says.

She made several attempts to connect with other moms, but factors like different lifestyles and schedules made things difficult. Eventually, she created a WhatsApp group chat specifically for this purpose. Benton added every new mom she met to the group, which she uses to share information about kid-friendly events, plan meet-ups and more.

By sharing information about events, sports teams, etc., group members often end up participating in the same activities in addition to scheduled meet-ups, increasing that sense of connection.

For others looking to build this kind of community, Yuly has a few recommendations. For example, "I had to lose my shyness and be willing to ask other mothers if they would like to join us for a play date or for any of the other events I had scheduled in advance on my monthly plan."

When organizing meet-ups, she tries to plan activities a month in advance so that busy families have plenty of notice to work the event into their schedule.

"It really does take a village to raise a child," Benton says, "and to have an optimistic approach to parenting, you need to build a network of support to help and encourage you through the difficulties of being a parent. A child's well-being starts with family well-being, and family well-being starts with a strong community."

BUILD YOUR MOMMY TRIBE

Similarly to Benton, Kari Claitt found technology to be helpful in bringing moms together.

"As a new mom, I remember feeling alone. My world was all about a baby boy that barely slept!" Claitt says. "I was also a new SAHM [stay-at-home mom], so I didn't know where to meet other moms because I didn't leave the house very much."

Recognizing that many moms frequently turn to Facebook in their downtime, she started a Facebook group called Mommy Tribe, which has grown to 1,900 members. The group emphasizes playdates, Moms' Nights Out and chatting about relevant topics.

"It was very easy to set up!" Claitt says. "I just made this group and started sharing it with other moms on Facebook...I know a few moms that have met their best friends through that group, which is amazing!"

She credits the group's growth to word-of-mouth and the simple willingness of group members to get out and socialize.

"Being a mom is hard," Claitt says, "but you don't have to do it alone! I encourage you to step out of your comfort zone and set up a playdate or follow through on plans. You never know, you may be making a bestie!" **TK**

TARA RITTLER IS THE WEB & SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR AT TULSAKIDS MAGAZINE. SHE ENJOYS EXPLORING TULSA WITH HER SON, JOSS, AND SHARES THEIR ADVENTURES IN HER BLOG, SPAGHETTI ON THE WALL. READ IT AT TULSAKIDS.COM/BLOG.

HOW DO YOU MAKE MOM FRIENDS?

Ideas from TulsaKids' Facebook followers

"I began organizing events for a homeschool meetup group. My son has made so many great friends, and I have, too!" **KAREN B.**

"Literally start talking. I talk to moms at dance class, our neighborhood, the hair salon, at the park, church. Some have turned to friendships outside of our kids' events, and others may take some time. Be yourself. Building rapport = invites to events!" **FAYE P.**

"Sometimes it's in the heartache of navigating raising a child with complicated healthcare needs." **ANDEE C.**

"Youth sports is one of the best ways to meet new moms. That's what has worked for me, anyways." **TERESA H.**

"Started taking a Zumba class. Everyone is so nice and fun there." **SARA W.**

"I LOVE this question! For me, my mom friendships happened at the daycare level! Taking a genuine interest in all the kiddos in my son's daycare — not just my son — led to casual parent conversations at drop off/pick up that then evolved into meet-ups and playdates outside of school (for the kids and families alike!) My closest mom friendships are now close family friendships which all originated from FIRST deeply caring about the kids in my son's school community." **BEA K-D.**

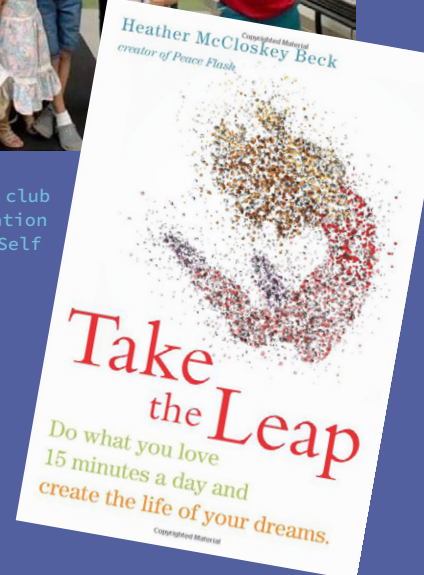


Yuly Benton and members of her WhatsApp group

A book club recommendation from Vanessa Self



Kari Claitt connects with moms through her Facebook group, Mommy Tribe





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Older Moms: Pregnancy After Age 35

BY BETTY CASEY

Many women are delaying pregnancy for a number of reasons, from establishing careers and completing education to better birth control and better health. The average age of pregnancy today is 27. Fifty years ago, it was 21. Dr. Erin Brown, assistant professor, residency program director and department chair in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Oklahoma State University Medical School, says that women are considered “advanced maternal age” if they are age 35 or older at the time of delivery. She has seen more older patients, and more women delaying pregnancy among friends and colleagues, but women should know that it is not without risk.

“It’s safer to have a baby now than in the past,” Dr. Brown says, “but the risk is still there.”

Better technology, more data and better, more specific, medical interventions have all made it possible to give older moms and their babies the best possible outcomes. Older women are often more settled in careers and relationships, giving them more resources to care for a child. However, older moms need to be aware that they have a higher risk of problems with pregnancy and delivery.

What are the risks?

“Pregnancy risks to women over age 35 increase with age, in general,” Dr. Brown says, “but we’re able to delineate more exactly what is age-based risk or if individual patients have other conditions that contribute to risk.”

Some of the complications for women during pregnancy include gestational diabetes, hypertension, miscarriage, cesarean delivery and preeclampsia (a serious form of high blood pressure).

“As a mom develops hypertension or gestational diabetes, we have research and data to monitor her more closely,” Dr. Brown says. “For example, we may do fetal monitoring on a weekly basis.”

Women over 35 are at a higher risk of having a stillbirth, or labor and delivery complications such as postpartum hemorrhaging. Knowing the risks, doctors can plan the timing of delivery to improve the outcomes for mom and baby.

Other risks for older moms include birth defects, Down syndrome or other genetic abnormalities.

Because the complications for both moms and babies increase as mothers age, it is important for women to see their OB-GYN very early in pregnancy, even if they have had a healthy

prior pregnancy. Doctors can discuss available tests and screenings that can help identify possible problems.

“Ultrasounds can find abnormalities,” Dr. Brown says. “Getting in early is really important. There is non-invasive testing for Down syndrome. We also do an anatomy scan in the second term that gives you an opportunity to pick up birth defects or abnormalities.”

Have a preconception appointment

All women can benefit from a preconception appointment, but it’s especially important for women over 35.

Women who are considering getting pregnant should have a health screening with their general practitioner to review medical history, surgical history and to help establish a healthy lifestyle prior to pregnancy.

“The primary care doctor can screen for any condition like diabetes, and also give recommendations for a healthy weight,” Dr. Brown says. “An OB-GYN can do a well-woman exam and counsel you on what to do.”

Dr. Brown encourages any woman anticipating pregnancy to start a prenatal vitamin with folic acid. Women should get to a healthy weight and make necessary lifestyle changes such as quitting smoking, alcohol or other drugs, and starting a healthy

diet. She points out that obesity exacerbates problems such as diabetes and hypertension during pregnancy. Doctors can also do genetic testing for many conditions, including cystic fibrosis.

The bottom line

Dr. Brown says women should know the risks of pregnancy at an older age, and how those risks increase as women approach age 40 and older.

“If you are considering being pregnant over 35,” she says, “talk to your doctor. The overall risk is still low; it’s just an increased risk. Even if you’re healthy without preexisting conditions, you’re still at increased risk because of your age.”

Your doctor can educate you on potential problems, assess your individual risk and talk to you about screenings, tests and how various conditions and difficulties can be handled.

“People do need to know the risks of miscarriage, birth defects, chromosome problems and pregnancy complications such as hypertension and gestational diabetes as well as risks at the time of delivery,” Dr. Brown says. “If you are age 35 or older, your pregnancy will be monitored more closely. Get early prenatal care. There’s a lot we can do early, screen for and watch for.” •

Baby Showers: What's Trending?

BY TARA RITTLER



A lot has happened in the eight-plus years since I had my baby showers, one thrown in Tulsa by friends, and one in Wichita by family. That's my excuse for having trouble remembering all the details: What did we eat? Did we play games? Looking at photos helps, but unfortunately, I can't find any from the Tulsa shower. So here's your first tip: Make sure someone is taking pictures!

The most memorable thing I've ever done at a baby shower is the "Guess which chocolate bar is smeared into these diapers" game. Let your imagination supply that visual. Some people got way more into it than others, hamming it up and dipping their finger into the brown goo and taking a taste.

That kind of over-the-top baby shower game doesn't seem to be in vogue these days. Below, two local moms share highlights from their recent baby showers and provide insight into what's trending when it comes to throwing a shower.



MORE IDEAS FROM AMY'S SHOWER

- **The Name Game:** Everyone writes down as many baby names as they can think of corresponding to the letters of the alphabet. The winner is whoever writes down the most names that the mother-to-be wrote as well.
- **Cookie Favors:** Guests get to take home a sugar cookie decorated to match the shower theme.

Amy's Registry Highlights:

- Hatch sound machine
- Lovevery Play Gym
- A swivel glider matching the nursery décor

Books for Baby

If you're eager to raise a reader, you'll appreciate the "Books for Baby" trend! Along with items from their traditional registry, mothers-to-be may request books in lieu of cards. This allows the giver to still include a heartfelt note while gifting something that can be used again and again.

Amy Johnson's Beatrix Potter-themed baby shower was held in June 2023. She built a traditional registry through Babylist.com, which allows users to add items from sites like Target and Amazon in a central location. But her shower hosts included a separate note in the invitation reading,

*One small request,
we hope it's not too hard,
Please bring a book
instead of a card,
By signing your book,
we'll remember and share
Your special gift, even
when you're not there.*

"I think part of what plays into the books instead of cards [trend] is that there has been a lot of research done on early reading and how it can impact the trajectory of your child's life," says Johnson, whose baby was due July 29. "I also think moms and dads just love to have a stocked bookshelf to be excited about!"



If you're attending a book-gifting shower and wondering which book to give, Johnson says, "I love all books, especially about kindness, diversity through a child's eyes, etc. A lot of people gifted books that their kids loved as children, which was super special to me. High-contrast, rhyming books or pop-up/out books are always good choices. We were given some classics as well, such as *The Velveteen Rabbit*, *Love You Forever* and, of course, some Dr. Seuss titles."

Keep It Simple

Frankie Self, mother to daughter Rowan (born January 2023), has a good feeling for baby shower trends. As a baker, she has provided treats for many a shower—in addition to attending her own and several friends' showers.

Self's baby shower incorporated many of these trends, such as boho décor, brunch and an emphasis on keeping things low-key.



Although taking a break from baking following the birth of her daughter, Frankie Self has provided beautiful cakes and cookies for multiple baby showers.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FRANKIE SELF

FRANKIE'S BABY SHOWER TIPS:

- **Have It Early:** Self is glad she had her shower several months before Rowan's birth. This was to avoid holiday schedules, but also gave her a chance to figure out what they still needed well before the baby's birth.
- **Make It Co-Ed:** Co-ed showers are trending, which can minimize stress on the mom, especially if the father-to-be's family and friends are on the guest list anyway. "You don't feel like you have to bridge that gap," explains Self.

Frankie's Registry Highlights:

- Burp cloths
- Battery-powered light that dims (This helps with nighttime breastfeeding, saving you from having to turn on a bright, overhead light.)
- A good swaddle that velcros or zips

ADDITIONAL BABY SHOWER SUGGESTIONS

We asked TulsaKids' Facebook followers to tell us about interesting baby shower trends and ideas they'd seen. Here's what they had to say:

"[Have] guests pick a letter and decorate a page corresponding for the baby's first 'ABC' book. They can sign the back with a prayer, note, etc. It's a cute keepsake." **KRISTINA B.**

"This was 10 years ago, but I did our nursery in crosses and crowns. I bought blank wooden crosses and crowns of different styles, provided the paint colors of our nursery, and everyone decorated one of their choice and wrote a message to baby on the back of it. We still have them all to this day. The concept could be repeated for whatever nursery style/design." **ANGELA S.**

"A guest book quilt! I had people sign the fabric [squares,] then put them all together." **ERIN H.**

"My friend got an invite for 'mail-only shower,' where you just mail them a gift and don't actually meet in person." **KRISTIN S.**

"Diaper and wipe shower (no gifts other than diapers and wipes unless you really want to, and then it's in addition to a package of wipes or diapers). My run group did this for me. I didn't have to buy diapers for almost 9 months and almost made it to the one-year mark with wipes. It was lovely!" **KATHLEEN K.**

"I'm always one for more low-key, keep it simple," Self says. "Come and go as you want; you don't have to stay the whole time."

This come-and-go nature can make it easier for people with busy schedules to attend the shower. She also likes the idea of playing simple, optional games that don't make guests feel put on the spot.

At a baby shower, you often have an eclectic group of people," she explains. "Not everyone knows each other, and there's nothing worse than being put on the spot in front of people you don't know."

At her shower, Self's sister hid pacifiers around the house. If you found one, you got to take home some of the flowers that doubled as décor.

Speaking of décor, Self thinks people gravitate to the boho décor trend because it's easy to customize colors, while keeping things clean and simple. "You can do boy/girl colors or keep it gender neutral. It doesn't have to be

super specific," she says. "And sometimes, I feel like if you lean too much into a theme, people buy stuff based on that theme," rather than more practical items.

The Guest of Honor

The bottom line when it comes to your baby shower is to remember that you're the guest of honor.

"Everyone's an individual. It's your shower," Self explains. "If there's something you want, you should do it and not worry about what anyone else would say or do."

And if that includes playing the "chocolate bar blowout" game, well, your shower will certainly create some hilarious memories. •



Support for Postpartum Depression is First Step to Recovery

BY MIKAELA LEBLANC



KIEFERPIX/GETTY

Postpartum depression appears with varying symptoms and in varying degrees for new mothers. Recognizing the signs and having a support system are critical to recovery and mental health.

Dr. Karla Kerby, a licensed marriage and family therapist at the Postpartum Clinic of Tulsa, says that postpartum depression is more common for women who have suffered with mental health issues before pregnancy.

According to the National Institutes of Health, around one in seven women develop depression after their pregnancies, so it's important to recognize the symptoms and to seek help.

Kerby says symptoms for postpartum depression are similar to the symptoms of general depression: amotivation, no interest, crying for long periods of time, lack of self-care, lack of energy, a desire to sleep, snapping at one's partner and isolation.

Difficulty bonding with her baby is another symptom of postpartum depression.

"It is very common for a mother to say, 'I feel no connection to [my] baby,'"

Kerby says. "Depression is the root."

In addition, she says, a mother may not feel empathy toward her baby. "She will take care of her baby but have no emotional connection."

Postpartum depression doesn't always happen right after birth. Kerby says it can come on within a year after the baby is born.

Women need to know how to distinguish between depression and the more prevalent "baby blues," Kerby says.

"Most — 60-80% of mothers — [experience baby blues] because the body is changing hormonally," Kerby says. "If it lasts more than three weeks, it's probably postpartum depression."

Kerby strongly recommends immediately reporting any of these symptoms to a physician.

"If it's been a month and [a mother] is still having symptoms, mention it to your primary care physician. Don't wait," she says.

The Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale is a metric that mothers can get from their obstetrician and gynecol-

ogist to help guide them on when to look for help and what resources are available to help them.

In addition to depression, some mothers may experience postpartum anxiety, which presents with symptoms similar to general anxiety.

Some thoughts a woman with postpartum depression might have, Kerby says, include a series of "What if?" scenarios. Her thoughts may be racing, and she may be overcome with worry.

"What if baby doesn't sleep," Kerby says. "Or, what if I don't have the right diapers? She may worry about minor things."

Rarer is postpartum psychosis. "Usually, a family member or friend picks up on it," Kerby says. "There is no test. It can come on so quickly. It's similar to a bipolar episode."

In these situations, Kerby says, it's important for a mother with these symptoms to get to the emergency room immediately. "Don't leave them alone," she says. "They don't get better."

She says it's possible for a mother to become psychotic postpartum from untreated depression.

Kerby says symptoms of postpartum psychosis are typically fear-based. For example, the mother may feel that it's not safe in the house. She may ask family members or friends to take the baby and leave for fear that she will harm the child. She may also insist that she doesn't need sleep. Family members can support the mother and guide her to find help.

"It's important to have support and have families," Kerby says. "Whoever has been with them through the pregnancy."

While there is an intravenous medication available, and a newly FDA-approved pill to treat postpartum depression, Kerby says most patients can be treated with talk therapy. She says that with treatment, mothers are able to bond better with their babies and the depression will lift, but she stressed the need for immediate attention and family support.

"You can't go six weeks with something like that," Kerby says. "I will stay late or weekends [to treat mothers] because it's a horrible thing." •



MILLANN/GETTY

Sharing Stories, Building Bonds: Early Literacy and the Power of Storytimes

BY ALEX MULLIN, COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST,
TULSA CITY-COUNTY LIBRARY

The importance of reading begins before birth. From narrating to your baby while they are still in the womb to enjoying bedtime stories together, building your child's literacy skills comes in many forms. If this is your first foray into the realm of early literacy, or if you need a gentle reminder of its wonders, buckle up! The activities and resources below, available inside and outside of your home, can help introduce your child to language and reading during a critical time in their development and provide bonding experiences you both will cherish.

Picture this: You and your baby snuggled up on a comfy chair, flipping through a colorful picture book and giggling together over images, sounds or actions. This is a lapsit storytime, and it's not just a heartwarming bonding experience; it's a powerful tool for early literacy.

When you engage your child physically during storytime, such as by pointing to the pictures that match what you're saying or allowing your baby to grab and touch the book, you create a sensory adventure. Babies learn new letters, sounds and words when you talk, sing, read and even write together, and this new information is put to practice during playtime. You can do all these activities at home ... and at the library!

The five actions just mentioned (reading, talking, singing, writing and playing) are the basis of Tulsa City-County Library's Build A Reader storytimes. Designed for children ages 0 to 5, these specialized storytimes focus on babies, toddlers or both. Storytimes tailored to babies are lapsit style and are a fantastic way to nurture your child's literacy skills.

With a focus on the joy of books and interactive experiences, library story-

times bring the importance of sensory reading to the forefront. Visit your local library to find the storytime that's right for you. While you're there, be sure to check out books for storytimes at home, because reading is much more than learning. Books ignite your child's curiosity, open doors to new adventures and inspire endless possibilities, and a library card is your ticket to thousands of books. But if you're interested in building your child's at-home library, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is for you.

In partnership with the Birth through Eight Strategy for Tulsa, an initiative of the George Kaiser Family Foundation, and the Oklahoma State Department of Education, the Dolly Parton Imagination Library of Tulsa City-County Library mails a high-quality, age-appropriate book to your child every month from birth to age 5 for free! Imagine your child's excitement as they anticipate a new book each month to enjoy and add to their permanent collection.

Furthermore, the Imagination Library contributes toward kindergarten readiness by building reading familiarity and confidence, and promotes family literacy habits by creating a monthly storytime event you and your child can experience together again and again.

Wherever your child is on their literacy journey, now is the time show them the joy of books, nurture precious bonds and build a strong foundation for a life-long love of reading. Let the adventure begin!

Register for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library online: tulsalibrary.org/imagination-library.

To find a Build A Reader storytime near you, visit tulsalibrary.org/events. •

The Importance of Swim Lessons for Babies and Toddlers

SPONSORED BY MILLER SWIM SCHOOL



PHOTO COURTESY OF MILLER SWIM SCHOOL

Swim lessons are not only fun for babies and toddlers, but also provide so many benefits. Swimming lessons can reduce the risk of childhood drowning by 88%. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that all children learn to swim. By starting your children early, you can help them build confidence, create positive experiences, learn ways to protect themselves and nurture their swimming skills. Here's why you shouldn't wait to get started!

Swimming lessons promote safety. During swimming lessons, students learn how to feel comfortable in and around the water. Good swimming

lessons will teach the basics of water safety and how to prevent accidents from occurring. Children will learn a valuable skill that will be helpful throughout their entire life. Drowning is one of the leading causes of accidental death for children 4 years and younger, and many young children don't have the swimming skills to save themselves from drowning. Participating in swimming classes can help prevent these tragedies from happening.

Swimming lessons are fun. During classes, kids have fun! Classes for infants give parents a developmentally appropriate, hands-on way to

have fun, learn basic water safety and to bond with their baby. Older children get to make friends and meet new people. They also play games and participate in activities that are equally fun as well as important in gaining swimming skills.

Swimming lessons help build confidence. Learning and mastering critical thinking, gross- and fine-motor skills is an important part of development in children, and swim lessons help build those skills. Participating in swim lessons allows kids to learn new skills and water safety. Plus, it allows them to practice using all these skills in practical ways.

Swimming lessons help set up healthy habits. It is recommended that children participate in daily physical activity for their development. Swimming is a great way to improve fitness, especially because it is a low-impact sport, meaning it produces less stress on joints.

Miller Swim School is now enrolling for fall and winter of 2023. Lessons start as early as 4 months old. •





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RSV: Expert Answers to Your Questions

BY STAFF



Respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, is a common virus with cold-like symptoms that can be dangerous for infants or for those compromised due to other chronic illnesses or conditions. Because it is one of the most common illnesses in early childhood, new parents need to arm themselves with information to protect their children. We asked Dr. Donna Tyungu, chief of pediatric infectious diseases with Oklahoma Children's Hospital OU Health, to answer questions about the virus.

Q: What is RSV and how is it dangerous for infants?

Dr. Tyungu: RSV is respiratory syncytial virus. It is a respiratory virus that infects the breathing passages and can sometimes cause a severe lung infection in very young patients called bronchiolitis. It can cause respiratory problems for people of all ages but is one of the most common diseases of early childhood. Unfortunately, each year, up to 80,000 children in the USA under the age of 5 are hospitalized for RSV, and, tragically, 100-300 may die from this infection.

For very young children, one concern is the amount of secretions produced by the body in response to the virus. The nasal passages are small, and since young babies predominantly breathe through the nose, excess nasal secretions can impact breathing. Most

infants with RSV will experience upper respiratory tract symptoms. Up to 30% can develop the lower lung disease with their very first RSV infection.

Factors that increase risk of severe RSV include prematurity, chronic lung disease, congenital heart disease, being immunodeficient, neurologic and/or neuromuscular disease. We do know that children with asthma do worse overall with any viral infection comparatively. Also, children who experience severe RSV early in life are at risk for developing asthma later on.

Q: Do health care professionals expect high numbers of RSV patients this year? Why or why not?

Dr. Tyungu: All we can do at this point is make predictions. The past few years with public masking and a new pandemic virus circulating, the typical course of RSV was altered. We saw very unusual summertime RSV spikes, as well as earlier waves of cases in the fall.

This year, I anticipate that we may have an RSV season similar to those of the past, and mostly in the winter months. This is because nationally the rates are currently relatively low, and I would have expected a summer spike to already be underway. This is concerning because we will likely have influenza and COVID spikes this winter again as well, which could

strain our hospital systems again. That being said, it's still just a hypothesis at this point.

Q: What can parents do to prevent their infants from getting RSV? Is there a vaccine available to the general public?

Dr. Tyungu: RSV is highly contagious and spread through droplets. Parents and other adults can easily spread the infection to young children, so parents can discuss vaccination with close eligible family members.

In May of 2023 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved a Respiratory Syncytial Virus vaccine for those 60 years and older, which is expected to be available this fall. The data showed that those older adults who had the vaccine lowered the risk of developing lower respiratory tract disease from RSV. The risk of severe disease decreased by 94%. This is important in pediatrics because newborns will frequently encounter respiratory viral infections from their immediate family, so if individuals around them such as grandparents have the ability to increase their level of protection, it may help cocoon the newborn at least until they are a little older when the virus is more tolerated.

In this trial, they did immunize pregnant mothers as well. Maternal antibodies can protect newborns after

delivery and may be enough to get them through their first winter without contracting the virus or, if they do contract RSV, it may prevent hospitalization. The data show that the vaccine reduced the risk of severe lower respiratory tract illness in infants up to 3 months of age by 81%, with continued reduced risk of 69% by 6 months of age. This was good news, but there is still a question about post-vaccine premature delivery that is being debated. The FDA will meet in August to discuss whether or not to approve the vaccine for pregnant women.

Q: Health care professionals are talking about the "triple threat." What does that mean? Can children younger than 1 year get a COVID vaccine? What about a flu vaccine?

Dr. Tyungu: A triple threat would be an RSV, influenza and COVID-19 surge at or around the same time. This is of concern as it could potentially stretch hospital resources again. Multiple respiratory viruses in circulation simultaneously will also result in a patient being infected with more than one virus at the same time, which is a threat to individual patient health.

Children can be vaccinated against influenza and COVID-19 after the age of 6 months. Parents should discuss these vaccinations with their child's

If possible, keep your baby away from anyone, including older siblings, with cold symptoms, avoid environments with smoke and stay up to date on childhood vaccines.

pediatrician and pursue vaccination to help mitigate the risks of infection.

Q: What about adults? What preventative vaccines should they get, and when should they get them? What vaccines should pregnant women get?

Dr. Tyungu: There are a slew of vaccinations available to adults, and these vary by patient condition and health, so everyone should speak with their own primary care provider when deciding on vaccinations. In general, COVID-19 vaccine and/or a booster is available for those who are not up to date. The CDC has worked to simplify what up-to-date means. Find information at [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html)

Generally, everyone 6 years of age and older are up to date when they have one updated Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. Those who choose not to get Pfizer or Moderna do have another option to consider, the Novavax vaccine.

The influenza vaccine will become available in the fall. Typically, we advise people to get an influenza vaccination in late fall (September or October) so that immunity

is in place before the virus is fully circulating within the community.

Q: Is there anything else parents, pregnant women or caregivers should know about preventing these illnesses as we head into the fall and winter months?

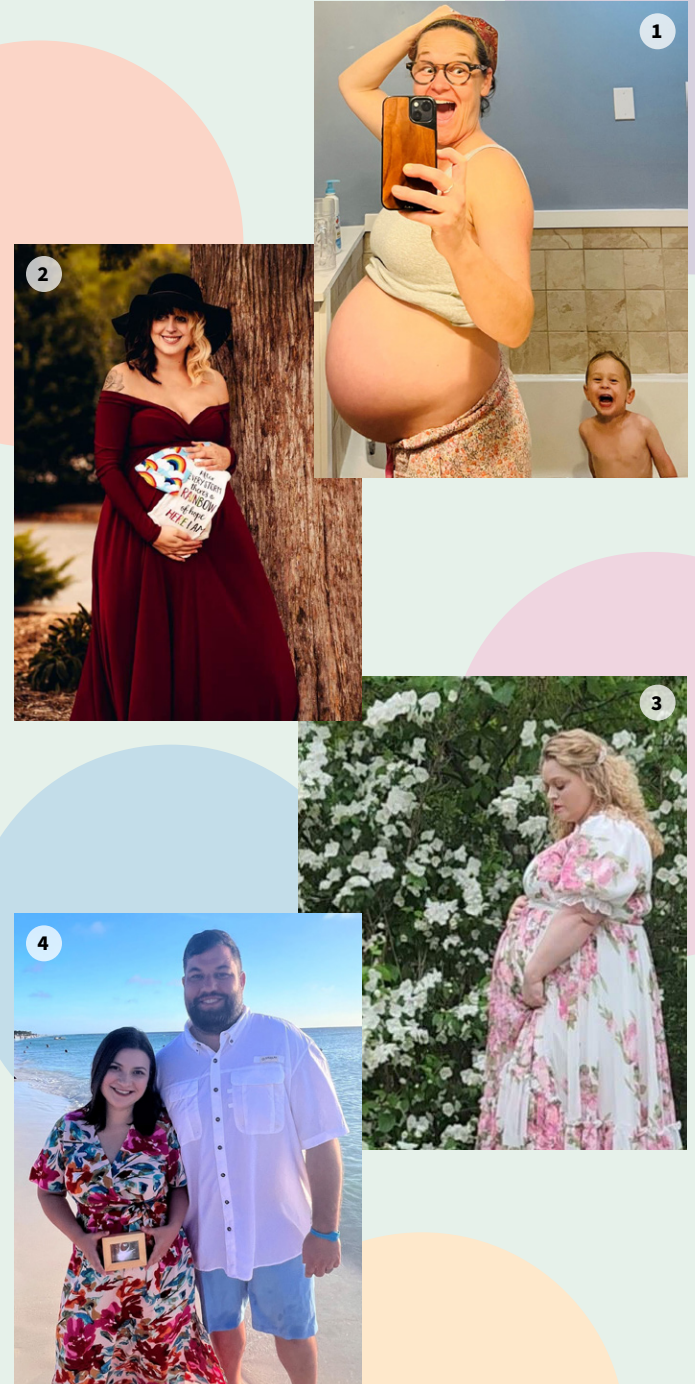
Dr. Tyungu: Some practical things that parents can do is have a winter hygiene plan that includes taking extra care to clean hands and surfaces especially if working with young children or breast feeding. It's always okay to ask people to first wash their hands before touching your baby. Avoid kissing your baby on the face if you have cold symptoms, keep the baby away from crowds, wash toys and the baby's environment regularly.

Also, limit the time high-risk babies and young children stay in day care, particularly from late fall to early spring when RSV is most prevalent. If possible, keep your baby away from anyone, including older siblings, with cold symptoms, avoid environments with smoke and stay up to date on childhood vaccines. Finally, if your child is sick — keep them home and don't send them to day care. •

Thank you for entering our Mama To Be Photo Contest!

In August, TulsaKids ran a Mama To Be Photo Contest in partnership with Family Favorite Newborn Photographer Taryn Starkey, The Photo Doula. Here are just a few of the beautiful entries. Best wishes to everyone who entered!

- 1— Blair Abrahamson and Boyd. Photo by Blair Abrahamson
- 2— Kathryn Brock. Photo by Taryn Starkey — Photo Doula
- 3— Candace Pitts. Photo by Candace Pitts
- 4— Kirsy, Eli and baby boy McDowell. Photo by Abby Williams





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Resources

BREASTFEEDING

La Leche League of Tulsa

Meetings are informal discussions and are open to all women interested in breastfeeding. Both in-person and virtual meetings are held monthly. Children of all ages are welcome. You can check out the meetings page link on La Leche League's website for more information. There also are many resources for breastfeeding families who are not able to make it to meetings, including a breastfeeding hotline, leader-provided support via call, text or email; and an array of helpful information on LLL's Facebook page.

lloftulsa.org

Coalition of Oklahoma Breastfeeding Advocates

Information and support, including workplace rights. 24-hour assistance with certified lactation consultants.

okbreastfeeding.org/breastfeeding-help/oklahoma-breastfeeding-hotline

1.877.271.6455 or text OK2aBF to 61222

okbreastfeeding.org

Area hospitals offer breastfeeding information and classes (see hospital information).

CHILDBIRTH INFORMATION

(See hospital information for childbirth classes)

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

Addresses a wide range of topics such as breastfeeding and gestational diabetes.

acog.org

Helpful, patient-centered information about a wide range of women's health topics, including informative information for teens, can be found on the "For Patients" tab or at **acog.org/womens-health**

American College of Nurse-Midwives

Provides information about certified nurse-midwives and their support of women's health through all stages of life, including pregnancy.

midwife.org

Find a midwifery practice in your area:
midwife.org/find-a-midwife

Birthright of Tulsa

With an emphasis on helping all women facing unplanned pregnancies, Birthright of Tulsa is a nonprofit crisis pregnancy service to help "every pregnant woman and mother struggling with a troubled pregnancy or parenting concerns, regardless of age, race, religion, marital standing

or economic status." Pregnancy testing, counseling, prenatal care, parenting classes, maternity and baby clothing, diapers/wipes, medical referrals, agency referrals, select financial assistance.

24-hour hotline: 1.800.550.4900

6600 S. Yale, Suite 1307, Tulsa; 918.481.4884;
tulsa@birthright.org; birthright.org/tulsa

Bradley Method of Husband-Coached Natural Childbirth

Classes that guide pregnant women and their partners through the Bradley Method of natural, un-medicated childbirth, including information on prenatal nutrition and exercise.

1.818.788.6662; **bradleybirth.com**

International Childbirth Education Association (ICEA)

Supports and advocates for prenatal professionals providing families with education and care with regards to prenatal care and childbirth options.

919.674.4183; **info@icea.org; icea.org**

Lamaze International

Provides parents with evidence-based education pertaining to pregnancy, birth practices and parenthood, ensuring that families are confident and informed at every step of the journey.

202.367.1128; **info@lamaze.org; lamaze.org**

Tulsa Doulas Inc.

A nonprofit support, resource and referral group supporting doulas in Tulsa and the surrounding area. Find a local doula and/or discover how a doula can help expecting families.

tulsadoulas.com

Additional information about doulas, finding a doula or becoming a doula can be found at **dona.org**

PLAYGROUPS, PROGRAMS, SUPPORT, CLASSES AND INFORMATION

American Academy of Pediatrics

Information for parents on a wide range of child development and health topics, covering every stage from prenatal to young adult.

aap.org; healthychildren.org

Catholic Charities of Eastern Oklahoma

Care clinic offering pregnancy testing, prenatal care and postnatal care. Other services include counseling, prenatal education, immigration legal services, care for homeless mothers and children, a residential program for pregnant women, adoption services and assistance applying for Medicaid (SoonerCare).

2450 N. Harvard Ave., Tulsa; 918.949.HOPE(4673);
cccek.org

Community Action Project (CAP) of Tulsa

Early Childhood Education, home-based Early Childhood Education, ESL classes, income tax assistance and a variety of other services for families.

Legacy Plaza 5330 E 31st St, Suite 300, Tulsa;
918.382.3200; **captulsa.org**

Community Service Council of Greater Tulsa

Operates Tulsa 2-1-1 Helpline and online site **211eok.org**, which provide referrals to a wide range of community services and resources as well as information, referral and crisis intervention for Eastern Oklahoma. Also provides the Child Care Resource Center, which helps parents find childcare and keeps families informed of safety recalls. Local sites also offer assistance with car seat installation.

918.834.2273; **ccrc@csctulsa.org; csctulsa.org/ccrc**

Tulsa Educare

A state-of-the-art early childhood center and Head Start that provides education and care for children (birth to age 5) and their families with full-day, year-round early childhood education, family support services and ongoing medical care.

tulsaeducare.org

Emergency Infant Services

Provides formula, milk, blankets, clothing, medicine, etc. to meet the basic needs of infants and children under age 5 whose families are in crisis or emergency situations.

1110 S. Denver Ave., Tulsa; 918.582.2469;
eistulsa.org/en/contact

Family & Children's Services

Offers a variety services, including children's counseling and mental health services, family counseling, family life education classes and workshops, and more. Make an appointment: 918.587.9471;

fcsok.org

Also operates Tulsa's crisis and emotional support hotline, COPES, which helps F&CS clients, community, adults and children in need. 918.744.4800

International Cesarean Awareness Network (ICAN)

ICAN gives support and information to mothers who have experienced cesarean births as well as those who would like further information before making informed decisions about their birthing options. For newsletter or information, call 1.800.686.4226.

ican-online.org

Resources

ICAN Tulsa

Local cesarean awareness and support.

1.800.686.4226 EXT 237; tulsa.ok@ican-online.org;
ican-online.org/tulsa

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

Nation's largest organization of early childhood professionals with a wide range of resources for adults who work for and with children.

800.424.2460; help@naeyc.org; naeyc.org

Parent Child Center of Tulsa

Education and treatment aimed at preventing child abuse. Includes crisis/respite services, prevention program, counseling services, resource library and parenting classes.

1421 S. Boston, Tulsa; 918.599.7999;
info@parentchildcenter.org;
parentchildcenter.org

Planned Parenthood

Offers a range of reproductive health services and information about a variety of topics, including pregnancy, health and wellness, and contraception.

1007 S. Peoria Ave., Tulsa; 918.858.4661;
plannedparenthood.org

Postpartum Support International (PSI)

Support for new mothers suffering from postpartum depression or those who have questions about it. Includes information on a range of perinatal mood and anxiety disorders and sources for help and care. Helpline for support, information and resources can be reached at 1.800.944.4773 (English and Spanish)

postpartum.net

SoonerCare (Oklahoma Medicaid)

A health coverage program jointly funded by the federal and state government to help pay some or all medical bills for those who can't afford them. Qualified children get free medical, vision, hearing and dental check-ups and services.

SoonerCare Help Line: 800.987.7767;
oklahoma.gov/ohca.html.

Oklahoma Department of Human Services:
oklahoma.gov/okdhs.html

SoonerStart

Oklahoma's early intervention program for families with infants or toddlers ages birth to 3 with developmental delays and/or disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Provides support and resources to enhance learning and development. For more information or to apply, go to sde.ok.gov/soonerstart.

Sprouts Child Development

Offers families a free online child-development screening questionnaire to help identify both children whose development is on track as well as those who may be experiencing developmental delays. The questionnaire is offered in both English and Spanish.

For children who may have delays, Sprouts advocates for early intervention and helps families find local resources for help and information. Sprouts has both therapy and developmental pediatrics clinics to provide care for children who qualify.

918.699.4250; sproutsdevelopment.com

Tulsa City-County Health Department Child Guidance

A statewide program that promotes and supports healthy family relationships and child development. Provides prevention, education, screenings, diagnostics and treatment to children and families. Child Guidance's staff of masters and doctoral degree level professionals include audiologists, child development specialists, speech/language pathologists and behavioral health specialists. Many of the services and classes are for a minimal fee.

918.582.9355;

tulsa-health.org/personal-and-family-health/child-guidance

Tulsa Health Department Children First

Offers home-based services by registered nurses to help first-time mothers and their families prepare for parenthood at no cost. Healthy family lifestyles and available community resources and supports are some of the topics that new mothers and their family members can receive information about.

918.779.6949;

tulsa-health.org/personal-and-family-health/child-health/children-first

WIC Women, Infants and Children's Nutrition Program

WIC is a supplemental nutrition program that helps protect the health of income eligible women, infants and children up to age 5 who are at nutritional risk. Families who qualify may receive nutrition education, social service referrals, breastfeeding support and benefits, and food benefits to be used for healthful foods.

In addition, certain WIC clinics now offer an early childhood literacy program that interested WIC program participants can enroll in.

918.582.9355; tulsa-health.org/WIC

INFANT LOSS

The Tristesse Grief Center

Support and counseling services for bereaved parents who have suffered the loss of an infant or child, regardless of any family's ability to pay. Support groups, training and professional grief counseling for adults, children and teens in one-to-one, couple and family settings.

2502 E. 71st St., Suite A; 918.587.1200;
hello@thegriefcenter.org; thegriefcenter.org

The Compassionate Friends

Offers support to bereaved parents and family members who have experienced the death of a child. Monthly local meetings and virtual chapters for grieving family members to share stories and support others.

877.969.0010 or 918.693.1914;
compassionatefriends.org

Various crisis hotlines, including one for those struggling with postpartum depression: 1.800.944.4773



First Candle

Provides comfort and promotes healing for families who have lost an infant. Works to eliminate SIDS and other sleep-related infant deaths through education and research, while providing bereavement support for grieving families who have suffered a loss. Offers peer-to-peer support groups, a bereavement library with resources and a 24-hour grief line.

1.800.221.7437; firstcandle.org

American Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Institute

A health care organization that works to prevent sudden infant death while promoting infant health through research, education and family support.

239.431.5425; sids.org

SAFETY & HEALTH

American Association of Poison Control Centers

24-hour poison emergency information as well as helpful tips for prevention such as home safety tips, daycare and school safety, and safe medicine disposal.

1.800.222.1222; aapcc.org; poisonhelp.org

American Red Cross

Provides life-saving information and training, including CPR, babysitting courses, swimming instruction, safety information, first aid and more.

918.831.1166;
redcross.org/local/oklahoma/about-us

Auto Safety Hotline

Information on infant car seats and recalls:
1.888.327.4236

How to file a safety issue: nhtsa.gov/report-a-safety-problem#index

Check for car seat recalls: nhtsa.gov/recalls

Car seat safety info: nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats

Safe Kids Tulsa Area

Helps families increase safety preparedness by distributing free materials and providing information about bike and water safety. Also hosts free car seat educational workshops in both English and Spanish and offers free car seat checkup events where Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians will inspect car seats for parents and caregivers.

For a schedule of monthly car seat checkup events, call 918.494.SAFE (7233) or go to saintfrancis.com/living-well/childrens-wellness/safe-kids/

Consumer Product Safety Commission

Information on safety standards and product recalls for cribs, toys and other children's accessories. Safety education section online where families can browse a variety of topics pertaining to children's products and safe environments for infants and children.

800.638.2772; cpsc.gov

InfantSEE

A Public Health Program that ensures infants between 6 and 12 months of age begin life with essential eye and vision care. American Optometric Association member optometrists provide free eye and vision assessments for infants who are between 6 and 12 months old, regardless of income or insurance coverage.

infantsee@aoa.org; infantsee.org

Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association (JPMA)

Helps consumers make informed decisions about which children's products to purchase, providing information about product quality, safe usage, and product recalls as well as additional educational information about safety.

jpma.org

Miller Swim School

Year-round infant and toddler classes for children ages 4 months to 3 years, prenatal water fitness classes for expectant mothers, swim lessons, CPR and First Aid certifications and safety instruction for parents and children in and around the water.

Locations in Tulsa, Owasso and Jenks.
918.254.1988; millerswimschool.com

Oklahoma Caring Van

Provides all immunizations required by Oklahoma law for enrollment in schools or childcare facilities. Services provided at no charge to children 6 weeks to 18 years who qualify; includes children who are uninsured, Medicaid eligible or American Indian.

918.551.3397;
oklahomacaringfoundation.org/caring-van;
Text TULSAVAN to 33633 to receive a van schedule.

Resources

Oklahoma Mothers' Milk Bank

Provides donor breast milk to meet the needs of infants, specifically those who are preterm or ill.

405.297.5683; info@okmilkbank.org; okmilkbank.org

Save Babies Through Screening Foundation, Inc.

A nonprofit foundation dedicated to making sure every newborn baby in the U.S. undergoes comprehensive and effective screening for a variety of diseases that are usually hidden at birth. Find out about screening in Oklahoma:

1.888.454.3383; email@savebabies.org; savebabies.org

Text4baby

Text message service and app designed to support pregnant women throughout their pregnancy and after the birth of their baby. Women who text BABY (or BEBE for Spanish) to 511411 will receive free text messages three times per week, timed to their due date or their baby's birth date, through pregnancy and up until the baby's first birthday. Texts are personalized for each expecting mother and include information from experts.

Additionally, the free Text4baby app provides additional information about the baby's development, pregnancy, childcare tips and more.

text4baby.org

Tulsa Health Department Immunizations

Information about immunizations and vaccines for children, including vaccine safety and a printable vaccine guide. Children through the age of 18 are eligible to receive vaccines at no charge through the Vaccines for Children program if they are uninsured, Native American Indian, Native Alaskan, or their insurance policy does not cover vaccines.

THD currently accepts Cigna, Community Care, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Health Choice, Medicare and SoonerCare Medicaid for immunizations. Fee for clients with private insurance (other than those listed) to be immunized at THD clinics to cover cost of vaccine. 918.582.9355;

tulsa-health.org/personal-and-family-health/testing-and-immunizations/vaccines

DISABILITIES

Ability Connection Oklahoma

Provides programs and services for Oklahomans with physical disabilities and their families, helping to advance independence, productivity and full citizenship.

405.759.3562; acok.org

AutismTulsa

AutismTulsa is a nonprofit organization and support group where families and community members can gain valuable resources and support. Provides

opportunities for individuals with autism to connect and interact with others while achieving personal growth goals, discovering interests, recognizing and expressing talents, and having fun along the way. Most programs are free or nearly free.

405.355.2525; Info@AutismOklahoma.org; autismoklahoma.org

CHADD

Seeks to improve the lives of children and adults with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) through education and training opportunities—including options tailored for parents—as well as through online support communities for parents and caregivers.

Contact an ADHD specialist: 1.866.200.8098; customer_service@chadd.org; chadd.org

Down Syndrome Association of Tulsa (DSAT)

A nonprofit organization that seeks to enhance the lives of individuals with Down syndrome, their families and communities by providing educational events and fostering meaningful connections while increasing awareness and an attitude of inclusion within the community.

918.804.3728; dsat.org

Little Light House, Inc.

Tuition-free, Christian education and therapeutic services for children age birth to 6 with special needs and their families. In addition, those who are on the waitlist for the Early Intervention program or Developmental Classroom program can participate in family gatherings, which are offered for parents and children of all ages and provide resources, tools, and hands-on training to help parents and guardians become confident caregivers.

5120 E. 36th St.; 918.664.6746; info@littlighthouse.org; littlighthouse.org

March of Dimes

Advocates for healthy moms and babies and seeks to end preventable maternal health risks and deaths, preventable preterm birth and infant death while closing the health equity gap. March of Dimes provides education about a variety of topics, including pregnancy, breastfeeding, birth defects, nutrition and more, as well as Mom & Baby Mobile Health Centers® and both online and in-person care and support.

1.888.663.4637; marchofdimes.org

Oklahoma ABLE Tech

Connects Oklahomans with disabilities to assistive technology.

800.257.1705; abletech@okstate.edu; okabletech.org



PEOPLEIMAGES/GETTY

The Arc of Oklahoma

Provides information about intellectual and developmental disabilities, legal rights, available programs and services for individuals with disabilities, and several support groups to promote valuable connections.

2516 E. 71st St., Suite A; 918.582.8272;
thearcok.org

Total Source for Hearing-loss and Access (TSHA)

A nonprofit, Tulsa Area United Way member agency that provides a variety of services to improve the quality of life and support greater independence for people with hearing loss. Advocacy, information on legal rights, referrals, help with access to assistive technology, and classes and workshops for those interested in learning sign language.

918.832.8742; **tsha.cc**

ADOPTION & SUPPORT

AdoptUsKids

The mission of AdoptUsKids is to recruit and connect foster and adoptive families with waiting children throughout the United States. Supports and guides families with the adoption process at every step of the journey. National photo listing.

888.200.4005 (English); 877.236.7831 (Spanish);
info@adoptuskids.org; adoptuskids.org;
espanol@adoptuskids.org

Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS)

Find foster care and adoption information and resources, including post-adoption resources.

6128 E. 38th St., Ste. 300, Tulsa; 918.794.7575;
okdhs.org

Dillon International, Inc.

Specializes in adoptions of children from other countries. Committed to helping families with the adoption process at every step, including after the adoption. Offers parenting and adoption workshops, heritage events, adoption awareness programs and other post-adoptive support.

7335 S. Lewis Ave, Suite 204; 1.918.749.4600;
dillonadopt.com

Eastern Oklahoma Catholic Charities Adoption Services

Adoption services and support for pregnant women looking into adoption for their baby and for adopting parents; pregnancy care resources; post-adoption search.

918.984.3507; 405.973.7050 (after hours);
adoptioninfo@cceok.org; cceok.org/adoption

Gladney Center for Adoption

Support, guidance and resources for anyone considering adoption, including women who are pregnant and considering their options, those who wish to become parents through adoption, parents who have already adopted a child, and those who would like to know more about adoption as an option for parenthood.

Online program AdoptED to provide factual information about what adoption is and how it really works. Post-adoption services for families as well as children or adult adoptees.

405.477.1063 (Oklahoma office); 817.922.6000;
adoptionsbygladney.com

Oklahoma Fosters Resource Center for New Foster Care & Adoption Families Hotline

Information on foster care for prospective foster parents, current foster parents, those looking to grow their family by adopting through foster care or those who have already adopted a child in foster care. Support groups, help finding an agency, online training, and more.

1.800.376.9729; **okfosters.org**

HOSPITAL CLASSES & INFORMATION

Ascension St. John Medical Center

Tulsa: 1923 S. Utica Ave.; 918.744.3131

Owasso: 12451 E. 100th St. North; 918.274.5000

Classes include Childbirth Education, Breastfeeding Basics, Dads Basic Training, Cesarean Birth Class, Maternity Orientation Class, Grandparenting Class and Newborn 101.

For more information and a complete, current list of classes, visit **healthcare.ascension.org**.

Oklahoma State University Medical Center

Completely renovated Department of Maternal Child Health with a family-friendly environment and a wide variety of medical professionals who are passionate about delivering babies and are available 24 hours a day, including neonatologists, neonatal nurses and respiratory therapists.

744 W. 9th St.; 918.599.1000; 918.599.5355;
osumc.com

Peggy V. Helmerich Women's Health Center

Classes include childbirth classes, car seat workshops, breastfeeding basics, baby care basics and infant and child CPR.

For a current listing of childbirth education classes, visit **helmerichwomenscenter.com**.

Women's Center @ Hillcrest: 1120 S. Utica Ave.; 918.579.8000

Women's Center @ Hillcrest South: 8801 S. 101st E. Ave.; 918.294.4000

Saint Francis Health System

Classes include a childbirth series, a weekend childbirth class, childbirth education, grandparenting resources, maternity area tours and breastfeeding basics.

For more information about classes, community events or for printed materials, visit **saintfrancis.com** or call 918.494.2200.

6161 South Yale Ave.; 918.494.2200

South Campus: Hwy 169 & 91st Street; 10501 E. 91st St. S.; 918.307.6000

CHILDCARE HELP

Community Service Council Child Care Resource Center

Program employing a staff of knowledgeable childcare professionals that offer resources and referrals for parents seeking licensed childcare options in the Tulsa area. Child Care Resource Center for early childhood educators and home care providers.

918.834.2273; For childcare referrals:
1.800.438.0008; **csctulsa.org/ccrc**

E-Nanny

Walks families through the process of finding a nanny that meets their unique needs, providing a candidate pool of seasoned professionals who are certified in CPR, first aid and water safety, and have a minimum of five years of relevant experience with a minimum of five references.

E-Nanny can provide long-term and short-term placements, as well as additional services.

918.973.3885; **enannyok.com**

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

Professional membership organization that works to promote high-quality early learning for all young children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood practice, policy and research. Resources, support and education for those who care for and work with children. Family section and blog include articles that have helpful information about young children's learning and development.

800.424.2460; **naeyc.org**

Seeking Sitters

Offers professional, prescreened babysitters with updated CPR and first-aid certifications. Full-time, part-time or last-minute care as well as nanny placement.

918.749.3588; **seekingsittertulsa.com**



FALL LIL' KICKERS:

Now – November 4

NO CLASSES:

September 2 or 4 (Labor Day)

September 9 or 16

(Turf Replacement)

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tulsakids.com/college

HTR PEDIATRIC THERAPY

Brooklyn Moore, MOT, OTR/L

HTR Pediatric Therapy



How can sensory strategies help my child go to sleep and stay asleep?

Sleep is a vital part of our lives and helps to restore our energy and prepare us for the day ahead.

These recommendations may help:

- **Create and Maintain a Routine:** It is important to create good sleeping habits and create a positive mindset about going to bed. A bedtime routine is a signal to our body that we are about to go to sleep. Find a bedtime routine that works best for you and your child. It does not have to be long or elaborate as long as you are consistent.
- **Reduce Screen Time Before Bed:** Bright screens stimulate the brain and make it more difficult for our brains to relax and to fall asleep. Try to limit the amount of screen time your child is engaging in before bed. A gradual decrease in screen time may be best for children who rely on electronics.
- **Create a Relaxing Sleep Environment:** There are a variety of strategies that can be used that depend on your child's needs and preferences. Here are some soothing ideas:
 - Keep the room cool
 - Sound machine if noises are not distracting
 - Weighted blanket for deep pressure input
 - Blackout curtains if light is bothersome

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



HTR PEDIATRIC THERAPY

RIDDLE LAW, PLLC.

Trevor Riddle



How can I ensure my children's educational needs are covered in my estate plan?

Ensuring their children's educational needs are met is a commendable goal many parents prioritize. In estate planning, one powerful tool to help parents achieve this goal is the Education Trust. This type of trust is specifically designed to fund your children's education, from school fees to college tuition. You can allocate assets and stipulate how they're disbursed, ensuring funds are used strictly for educational purposes. Additionally, you may consider 529 Savings Plans. These are tax-advantaged financial accounts dedicated to educational expenses.

As your children grow up, their educational needs may change. Regularly updating your estate plan will help you keep up with these changing conditions. Of course, collaborating with an estate planning attorney ensures your plan effectively addresses your children's educational future. Your proactive planning today can be their academic security tomorrow.

110 S. Hartford Ave., Suite 2548
Tulsa, OK 74120
918.779.1446
trevor.riddle@riddle.law



MILLER SWIM SCHOOL

Sarah Clavin



The ultimate new parent's guide to baby swim lessons:

1. **Start Early.** The sooner you can introduce your child to water the better.
2. **Have a Swim Diaper (or Two) Ready.** Reusable ones work best!
3. **Pack the Right Bag.** Bring a towel and a change of clothes for you and your baby.
4. **Arrive Early.** Give yourself extra time for the drive, getting dressed, using the restroom or changing diapers.
5. **Set Realistic Expectations.** Our instructors work hard to make classes fun and productive. But keep in mind there may be challenges. If your baby is having a hard day in swim class, try to remain calm and have fun. The more relaxed you are, the more relaxed they will be.
6. **Keep an Open Mind.** You might be surprised by how baby swim classes are structured. It might seem like a lot of playtime, with no real swim learning taking place. But our classes and curriculum were created with milestones and skills in mind—and they work!
7. **Ask Questions.** Instructors can provide tips for what to work on at home or let you know why we do things a certain way.

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



DENTAL DEPOT

How can I get my kid excited to see the dentist?

When it comes to dental hygiene and dentist visits, parents are the best role models for kids. Parents and children share very similar dental issues. Kids are excited if parents are excited, so even if the parent has high anxiety about going to the dentist, it is important that they hide that scary feeling and put on a smile for their kids. Choosing a dentist that can see the whole family is an amazing way to lead by example.

Another way to lead by example is to brush your teeth with your kids or to take part in brushing their teeth with them. Until a child can tie their shoes on their own, they do not have the necessary dexterity to brush their teeth completely on their own. Brushing your teeth is the best way to ensure cavities are kept to a minimum. That being said, most kids fight parents who try to brush their teeth. We all have to do things we don't love, but eventually it will become a habit. It's a parent's job to ensure that the habit forms.

Parents are the true heroes when it comes to oral health, so be the hero!

Six Convenient Tulsa Metro Locations
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SEPTEMBER 2023

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



AUTUMN IN THE GARDEN September 21 Details p. XX

Celebrate the changing
season at **Tulsa Botanic
Garden's Autumn in the
Garden** celebration,
Sept. 21 through October.

PHOTO COURTESY
TULSA BOTANIC GARDEN



CREATIONS IN STUDIO K September 15-24 Details p. XX

Tulsa Ballet's new season
kicks off with Creations
in Studio K, Sept. 15-24.

PHOTO BY JOSH NEW

STORY TIME AT TULSA ZOO Weekly Details p. XX

Visit **Tulsa Zoo's** adorable
new arrival this month!

PHOTO COURTESY TULSA ZOO



BROUGHT TO YOU BY





Step up to the mic and enjoy an evening of karaoke and other entertainment and **Gaining Ground Literacy's Rock and Read** fundraiser, Sept. 9.

PHOTO COURTESY GAINING GROUND LITERACY

September 1 Friday

FAMILY NATURE WALK + NATURE FUN FRIDAYS W

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

Spark your curiosity at an easy-going Family Nature Walk, then stick around for an exciting hands-on nature exploration.

LA2023 KICK-OFF EVENT F

All ages, 3-7 p.m., Mother Road Market, 1124 S. Lewis Ave., thelemonaidproject.org

If you haven't already, sign up for your Lemon-Aid stand. Proceeds from the 2023 Lemon-Aid Project will benefit Lindsey House.

SYMPHONY IN THE PARK F

All ages, 8 p.m., Guthrie Green, 111 E. Reconciliation Way, tulsasymphony.org

Join Tulsa Symphony in kicking off their new season with a free concert! Register for your free ticket for a chance to win tickets to upcoming performances.

September 2 Saturday

TULSA FARMERS' MARKET F W

All ages, 7-11 a.m., Kendall Whittier Square, 1 S. Lewis Ave., tulsafarmersmarket.org

Purchase fresh produce and other locally produced goods.

SATURDAY FAMILY FUN DAY! F

All ages, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Charles Page Library, 551 E. 4th St., Sand Springs, tulsalibrary.org

Join for LEGOs, crafts, art and fun.

BROOKSIDE MAKER CLUB F

For teens and adults, 3-4 p.m., Brookside Library, 1207 E. 45th Pl., tulsalibrary.org

Join to sew, draw, crochet, paint and more! Bring your own project to work on. All skill levels welcome.

September 3 Sunday

SENSORY SKATE SUNDAY

All ages, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Wheels and Thrills, 10637 N. Garnett Rd., Owasso, wheelsandthrills.com

On the first Sunday of the month, Wheels and Thrills will suspend their arcade and laser tag. There will be no flashing lights or loud music.

September 4 Monday

OPEN FOR LABOR DAY

All ages, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Tulsa Botanic Garden, 3900 Tulsa Botanic Dr., tulsabotanic.org

The Garden will be open regular hours on Labor Day.

MONDAY MORNING PROGRAMMING W

For early learners, 11-11:30 a.m., Discovery Lab, 3123 S. Riverside Dr., discoverylab.org

Early learners and their caregivers can participate in educational activities taught by experienced educators.

September 5 Tuesday

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: BABIES F W

Ages 0-2, 10-10:20 a.m., Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St., tulsalibrary.org

Learn and enjoy songs, stories and activities that are just right for your little one at this lapsit storytime.

STORYTIME AT ENCHANTED CHILDREN'S BOOKSTORE F W

All ages, 10:30 a.m., Enchanted Children's Bookstore, 1023 W. Main St., Collinsville, enchantedchildrensbookstore.godaddysites.com

Join Enchanted Children's Bookstore for storytime every Tuesday morning!

September 6 Wednesday

STORY TIME 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 every Wednesday! This week, Philbrook will be joining with free craft time.

TEEN LOUNGE F W

For teens and tweens, 3-6 p.m., Central Library, 400 Civic Center, tulsalibrary.org

Kick back and chill with art supplies, video games and plenty of space to study, read or hang out with friends.

SCARECROW CONTEST REGISTRATION DEADLINE

All ages, Virtual, tulsabotanic.org

Register to enter a scarecrow for their display during Autumn in the Botanic Garden. Prizes awarded. Details on website.

September 7 Thursday**STORYTIME IN THE GARDENS** W

Ages 0-10, 10-10:30 a.m.,
Philbrook Museum, 2727 S.
Rockford Rd., philbrook.org

Drop in for imaginative stories geared towards kids 10 and under every Thursday. Today, Tulsa Zoo will be joining with an animal ambassador guest.

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: BILINGUAL BABY F W

Ages 0-2, 11-11:30 a.m.,
Martin Regional Library, 2601 S.
Garnett Rd., tulsalibrary.org

Enjoy stories, rhymes and songs in English and Spanish!

September 8 Friday**STUDIO C: TEEN ART HANGOUT** F

For teens, ages 14+, 5:30-9 p.m., Philbrook Museum, 2727 S. Rockford Rd., philbrook.org

Hang out, try out new art or craft ideas or play a game with friends. Reserve free youth ticket to attend.

September 9 Saturday**TINKERFEST**

All ages, Discovery Lab, 3123 S. Riverside Dr., discoverylab.org

Join Discovery Lab for a day filled with DIY fun!

THE NUTCRACKER AUDITIONS

Ages 6-18, 2-4 p.m., Tulsa Ballet Studio K, 1212 E. 45th Pl., tulsaballet.org

Children ages 6-18 (between 3'10" and 5'10") with two or more years of dance experience are invited to try out for Tulsa Ballet's *The Nutcracker*. Learn more and register at tulsaballet.org

TULSA SYMPHONY PRESENTS PRELUDE

6 p.m., Tulsa PAC, 110 E. 2nd St., tulsasympphony.org

Tulsa Symphony Orchestra's 2023-2024 season kicks off with Beethoven's 5th Symphony featuring acclaimed cellist Sterling Elliot.

TRY HOCKEY FOR FREE F

For kids, 6-8 p.m., Oilers Ice Center, 6413 S. Mingo Rd., oilersicecenter.net

Fun event for kids who have never played hockey before and would like to give it a try. All equipment provided. Call 918.252.0011 for more information.

ROCK AND READ

For adults, 7-11 p.m., Bar 473, 2224 E. Admiral Blvd., gaininggroundliteracy.com

Sing your heart out on the outdoor stage for fun prizes or just sit back, watch the show and bid on some amazing items at the silent auction! This fundraising event benefits Gaining Ground Literacy.

September 10 Sunday**SENSORY-FRIENDLY FAMILY TIME**

All ages, 9:30-11 a.m., Discovery Lab, 3123 S. Riverside Dr., discoverylab.org

Guests who need a quieter, less crowded place to play can enjoy the Museum with their families.

September 11 Monday**MUSIC MONDAY** F

For toddlers to elementary students, 10:30-11 a.m., Central Library, 400 Civic Center, tulsalibrary.org

Sing, dance and have fun with our special guests from the Woody Guthrie Center.

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: FAMILY F

Ages 0-5, 11-11:30 a.m., Bixby Library, 20 E. Breckenridge Ave., Bixby, tulsalibrary.org

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

September 12 Tuesday**OXLEY SEEDLINGS**

Ages 1-5 + caregiver, 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. Registration required. Repeats Sept. 26.

COMIC BOOK CLUB: THE HARDESTY IRREGULARS — MILES MORALES F

Ages 5-12, 4-5 p.m., Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St., tulsalibrary.org

Explore a comic book/graphic novel featuring Miles Morales. Registration is encouraged. Register at tulsalibrary.org/events or call 918.549.7323.

JAGGED LITTLE PILL

Recommended ages 14+, 7:30 p.m., Tulsa PAC, 110 E. 2nd St., celebrityattractions.com

This exhilarating, fearless new musical is based on Alanis Morissette's world-changing music. Repeats Sept. 13.

September 13 Wednesday**HOMESCHOOL WORKSHOP: INTRO TO LIBRARY RESOURCES** F

Ages 5-18, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Maxwell Park Library, 1313 N. Canton Ave., tulsalibrary.org

Learn about the library's best digital resources for school projects and learn how to use them. Must pre-register at tulsalibrary.org/events or by calling 918.549.7323.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TULSA DRILLERS

Tulsa Drillers Games

Don't miss your chance to cheer for the Tulsa Drillers before their final home game of the season — September 17! Get tickets and promotion details at tulsadrillers.com.

9/1, 7:05 p.m. vs. Arkansas*

9/2, 7:05 p.m. vs. Arkansas*

9/3, 6:05 p.m. vs. Arkansas*

9/12, 6:05 p.m. vs. Corpus Christi

9/13, 12:05 p.m. vs. Corpus Christi

9/14, 7:05 p.m. vs. Corpus Christi

9/15, 7:05 pm. vs. Corpus Christi*

9/16, 7:05 pm. vs. Corpus Christi**

9/17, 6:05 p.m. vs. Corpus Christi*

*Fireworks show **Marvel Super Hero™ Night

September 14 Thursday**OILERS LEARN TO PLAY CLINIC**

For kids, Oilers Ice Center, 6413 S. Mingo Rd., oilersicecenter.net

Calling all kids interested in playing hockey! For \$199, receive a hockey equipment starter kit, plus 6 1-hour sessions of learning the sport of hockey. Call 918.252.0011 for more information.

OSU HOCKEY GAME

All ages, 7 p.m., Oilers Ice Center, 6413 S. Mingo Rd., oilersicecenter.net

It's the first home game of the season at Oilers Ice Center!

September 15 Friday**SCOTFEST**

All ages, Sept. 15-17, Broken Arrow Event Complex, 21101 E. 101st St., Broken Arrow, okscotfest.com

Celebrate Scottish, Irish and Celtic culture with a weekend of live music, Highland Games, food and entertainment for the whole family.

CREATIONS IN STUDIO K

7 p.m., Studio K, 1212 E. 45th Pl., tulsaballet.org

Tulsa Ballet's '23-'24 Season opens with Creations in Studio K, a program celebrating Tulsa Ballet's emphasis on creativity. Additional showtimes through Sept. 24.

BEAUTIFUL: THE CAROLE KING MUSICAL

8 p.m., Tulsa PAC, 110 E. 2nd St., theatretulsa.org

Witness the true story of Carole King's remarkable transformation from a young musical talent to a legendary rock hit-maker. Additional showtimes through Oct. 1.

September 16 Saturday**TINY TOTS** W

Ages 0-6, 9-11 a.m., Wheels and Thrills, 10637

N. Garnett Rd., Owasso, wheelsandthrills.com

Skate, play, ride and jump with your favorite characters! Today's visitors are from hit series *Bluey*!

OPEN STUDIO: NEW REALMS ARTIST SERIES

All ages, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Philbrook Museum, 2727 S. Rockford Rd., philbrook.org

Celebrate the final weekend of New Realms: Art Lab with two visiting artists: Jamie Pierson of Scraps Designs and sound artist Mark Kuykendall.

HISPANIC HERITAGE DAY F

All ages, 12-8 p.m., McCullough Park, 11534 E. 25th St., facebook.com/tulsaglobal

Kick off Hispanic Heritage Month and Welcoming Week with this event, featuring a Hispanic Business Exposition Fair, Latin food, music, folkloric dances and more.

LOS FESTIVALES Y MERCADOS: DÍA DE LA INDEPENDENCIA F

All ages, 3-8 p.m., Whittier Square, 1 S. Lewis Ave., visittkendallwhittier.com

Celebrate the independence of several Latin American countries with entertainment, food and the Mercado.

September 17 Sunday**RHEA LANA'S OF MIDTOWN TULSA** F

All ages, 12-7 p.m., Boman Twin Event Center, 2909 S. Sheridan Rd. Suite B, midtowntulsa.rhealana.com

Shop gently used items from wardrobe staples to furniture, gifts and more! Sale continues through Sept. 22; the daily schedule changes. Presale dates Sept. 15-16.



Get creative at **Philbrook's New Realms: Art Lab**, on view through Sept. 17.

September 18 Monday**MONDAY NIGHT TINY TOTS**

Ages 0-6, 6-8 p.m., Wheels and Thrills, 10637 N. Garnett Rd., Owasso, wheelsandthrills.com

Skate, play, ride and jump with Buzz, Woody and Jessie of Toy Story!

September 19 Tuesday**BUILD A READER STORYTIME: BILINGUAL FAMILY** F W

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.

S.T.E.M. NIGHT

All ages, 6 and 7 p.m., Oklahoma Aquarium, 300 Aquarium Dr., Jenks, okaquarium.org

Learn about environmental conservation while creating unique S.T.E.M. projects to take home.

September 20 Wednesday**LITTLE GARDEN EXPLORERS** W

Ages 0-5, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Philbrook Museum, 2727 S. Rockford Rd., philbrook.org

Spark wonder at this easygoing, drop-in play invitation.

September 21 Thursday**AUTUMN IN THE BOTANIC GARDEN**

All ages, Sept. 21-Oct. 31, Tulsa Botanic Garden, 3900 Tulsa Botanic Dr., tulsabotanic.org

Tulsa Botanic Garden rings in fall with a pumpkin patch featuring numerous varieties for sale, a maze, weekly Thursday night concerts and their annual scarecrow contest.

TINY TOTS W

Ages 0-6, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Wheels and Thrills, 10637 N. Garnett Rd., Owasso, wheelsandthrills.com

Skate, play, ride and jump. Don't forget your socks!

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: FAMILY/ DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY ENROLLMENT EVENT F

Ages 0-5, 11:30 a.m.-12 p.m., Herman and Kate Kaiser Library, 5202 S. Hudson Ave., tulsalibrary.org

Bring the whole family for storytime from 11-11:30 a.m., then stick around to learn about and enroll in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

September 22 Friday

WALTZ ON THE WILD SIDE

Ages 21+, 6-11 p.m., Tulsa Zoo, 6421 E. 36th St. N., waltzonthewildside.org

Mingle among favorite zoo animals as you enjoy heavy hors d'oeuvres from Tulsa's finest restaurants. Cool off with drinks throughout the zoo, then dance the night away with a live band at this annual Tulsa Zoo fundraiser.

September 23 Saturday

TOUCH-A-TRUCK F

Ages 0-12, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St., tulsalibrary.org

Explore vehicles of all sizes and meet the individuals who protect and serve the Tulsa community!

TULSA GREEK FEST

All ages, Sept. 21-23, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 1222 S. Guthrie Ave., tulsagreekfestival.com

Tulsa Greek Festival returns with authentic Greek food, folk dancing and more!

September 24 Sunday

Find more fun at tulsakids.com/calendar.

September 25 Monday

YUCHI LANGUAGE CLASS F

All ages, 6:30-7:30 p.m., Zarrow Regional Library, 2224 E. 51st St., tulsalibrary.org

Any and all skill levels are welcome to join this language revitalization class, led by Yuchi language instructor Brent Deo from the zOyaha School of Language. Repeats Sept. 11 and 18.

September 26 Tuesday

COOL CAT CRAFT F

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

Make cat face pillows that will stare and silently judge you in the night – just like a real cat!

GREENWOOD COMMUNITY FOOD AND RESOURCE FESTIVAL F

All ages, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Greenwood Cultural Center, 322 N. Greenwood Ave., foodonthemoveok.com

Get fresh, pay-as-you-can produce and community resources in a fun, festival-like atmosphere.

ALADDIN

Recommended ages 6+, 7:30 p.m., Tulsa PAC, 110 E. 2nd St., celebrityattractions.com

Discover a whole new world at Disney's Aladdin, the hit Broadway musical. Additional showtimes through Oct. 1.

September 27 Wednesday

GLASS PUMPKIN PATCH F

All ages, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Tulsa Glassblowing School, 7440 E. 7th St., tulsaglassblowing.org

Hundreds of glass pumpkins populate this unique patch benefiting Tulsa Glassblowing School. Shop daily, September 26-30.

TEEN CONNECTION F

For middle and high school students, 4:30-6 p.m., The Arc of Oklahoma, 7416 E. 71st St., Suite A, thearcok.org

This is a social group for students with high-functioning autism. Call 918.582.8272 for more information.



Senzel Ahmady (Jasmine) and Company in the *Aladdin* Tour.

PHOTO DEENVAN MEER DISNEY

11 Days of Awesome is back, as the
Tulsa State Fair returns Sept. 28–Oct. 8.

PHOTO COURTESY TULSA STATE FAIR



September 28 Thursday

TULSA STATE FAIR

All ages, Expo Square, 4145 E.
21st St., tulsastatefair.com

Tulsa State Fair kicks off its 11 Days of Awesome today! Try the latest fair food, ride your favorite rides, check out the livestock exhibitions and more!

DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY STORYTIME F

Ages 0-5, 10-10:30 a.m., Pratt Library, 3219 S. 113th Ave. W., Sand Springs, tulsalibrary.org

Join for a special storytime featuring Dolly Parton's Imagination Library and Dolly's favorite book, *The Little Engine That Could*.

September 29 Friday

BROKEN ARROW ROSE FESTIVAL AND CHALK IT UP! ART FESTIVAL F

All ages, 5-8:30 p.m., Broken Arrow Rose District, keepbabeautiful.org/rose-festival

Take in Broken Arrow's Annual Rose Show and some incredible original works of chalk art! Shop district businesses and enjoy other entertainment. Repeats Sept. 30, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.

FLINT FAMILY FOUNDATION CONCERT SERIES F

All ages, 10-11 a.m., Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St., tulsasympphony.org/flint

Join the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra (TSO) for a family-friendly concert for all ages. Get your free tickets at tulsasympphony.org/flint.

FOWLER AUTOMOTIVE PRESENTS: CAT VIDEO FEST

All ages, 5-9 p.m., Philbrook Museum, 2727 S. Rockford Rd., philbrook.org

Come to Philbrook for fun interactive activities that focus on all things feline, including this year's Internet Cat Video Fest!

MOVIE NIGHT F

All ages, 6-9 p.m., Will Rogers Memorial Museum, 1720 W. Will Rogers Blvd., Claremore, willrogers.com

Make movie-themed crafts and socialize from 6-7, then watch *Will Rogers Follies* beginning at 7!

NOCHE FESTIVAL: A CELEBRATION OF HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH F

All ages, 7-9 p.m., Kendall-Whittier Library, 21 S. Lewis Ave., tulsalibrary.org

Enjoy refreshments, piñatas, and singing and dancing along to music provided by a live mariachi band.

September 30 Saturday

EVERYONE HAS A STORY – DISCOVER YOURS

All ages, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Discovery Lab, 3123 S. Riverside Dr., givebutter.com/friendsofchildrentulsa

This event, benefiting Circle of Care – Oklahoma's largest provider of foster care services – features a performance and exciting kid's activity provided by Hot Toast Music Co., a delicious brunch and stories from Circle of Care clients. Afterwards, guests have access to Discovery Lab for the remainder of the day.

SET SAIL FOR SCHOLARSHIPS! FINDING AND APPLYING FOR SCHOLARSHIPS F

For high school students and parents, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Central Library, 400 Civic Center, tulsalibrary.org

Learn tips and tricks for navigating the scholarship landscape. Must pre-register at tulsalibrary.org/events or by calling 918.549.7323.

WWII RODEO

All ages, Tulsa Air and Space Museum, 3624 N. 74th E. Ave., tulsamuseum.org

See iconic WWII aircraft. Ground and flight deck tours available from 2-5 p.m. Repeats Sept. 29 through Oct. 1.

FESTIVAL AMERICAS F

All ages, 2 p.m., Guthrie Green, 111 E. Reconciliation Way, facebook.com/festivalamericas

This free, multi-cultural festival includes locally made Latin American food, live music, dance performances, a street market and other fun.

VERSES: LITERACY FUNDRAISER

For adults, 6-9 p.m., Central Library, 400 Civic Center, tulsalibrary.org

This event, benefiting TCCL's Ruth G. Hardman Adult Literacy Service, will feature live poetry readings, spoken-word performances, food and beverages for purchase from area eateries, and a market. Tickets are \$25.

Presented by the Helmerich Trust

Everyone
Has a Story

Discover Yours

a Friends of Children event benefitting



SEPTEMBER

30

2023

AT

10:00

AM



3123 Riverside Dr.
Tulsa, OK 74105

sponsored by
tulsakids
FOR ACTIVE PARENTS IN TULSA & SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

Visit givebutter.com/friendsofchildrentulsa/
or scan the code for
ticket information



GAINING GROUND



**Outdoor karaoke, tacos, drinks, silent auction, and
chances to win some sweet prizes!**

Sing your heart out on the outdoor stage for fun prizes, or
just sit back, watch the show, and bid on some amazing
items at the silent auction!



BUY TICKETS HERE

Included with your ticket:
Entrance to the event, taco dinner
provided by SJS Hospitality and Hotel
Indigo(dinner will be served from
7:15pm – 8:15pm), and unlimited
opportunities for fun and good vibes.

for more info, visit gaininggroundliteracy.org

**TIME TO TEXT THE BABYSITTER AND MAKE
RESERVATIONS FOR RESTAURANT WEEK!**

TulsaPeople's
17TH ANNUAL



RESTAURANT WEEK

SEPTEMBER 8-17, 2023

BENEFITTING
FOODBANK
OF EASTERN OKLAHOMA

**STEP-UP TO THE PLATE AND FIGHT HUNGER BY JOINING
TULSA'S BEST RESTAURANTS FOR THIS 10-DAY CELEBRATION
OF TULSA'S CULINARY SCENE BENEFITTING THE FOOD BANK
OF EASTERN OKLAHOMA'S FOOD FOR KIDS PROGRAMS!**

During Tulsa's 17th Annual Restaurant Week, participating restaurants
will offer a variety of special prix fixe menus with an automatic
donation to the Food Bank or their standard menus with a 3%
donation. Plus, some restaurants are offering a signature cocktail with
a donation, and all donations will be matched up to \$25,000 by the
George Kaiser Family Foundation!

2023 Prix Fixe Menu Options:

Brunch 2-3 courses \$27 includes \$4 donation	Lunch 2-3 courses \$20 includes \$3 donation	Dinner 2-3 courses \$30 includes \$4 donation
Dinner 2-3 courses \$40 includes \$5 donation	Dinner 3-4 courses \$50 includes \$7 donation	Signature Cocktail at participating restaurants includes \$1 donation

PRESENTING SPONSORS:



**GEORGE KAISER
FAMILY FOUNDATION**
A COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE OF OKLAHOMA

Justin Thompson
RESTAURANTS & CATERING



TulsaPeople

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FOR PARENTS. FOR FAMILIES. FOR LIFE.

BENEFITTING:

FOODBANK
OF EASTERN OKLAHOMA
FIGHTING HUNGER. FEEDING HOPE.



View the menus!

Jett Calmus:

Jenks High School Athlete

By Staff



PHOTO COURTESY OF REAGAN RENFROE PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTO COURTESY OF SHANNON KAYE PORTRAIT DESIGN

TULSAKIDS is highlighting the city of Jenks in this issue. Of course, we know that Jenks is not Tulsa, but it's a short drive to visit everything that Jenks has to offer — and there are many stand-out qualities. As we talked to families, we found that many love their school, and the community enjoys the annual Homecoming Parade as well as going to Jenks High School sports. When we interviewed the Calmus family, we learned that their son, Jett, is on the football and baseball teams and is in his last year of high school. We asked him to reflect on his last year and on his future.

TK: This is your senior year at Jenks High School. What are you looking forward to the most?

Jett: Playing my last high school season of football and baseball, Trojan Idol fundraiser for baseball and doing FCA this year.

TK: What are your favorite things about your school? Can you share a favorite memory from your time at Jenks HS?

Jett: Being able to get an education at one of the top schools in the state and playing sports at the highest level in Oklahoma. My favorite memory is winning the 6A-1 State Football Championship.

TK: How long have you played football? What position do you play? Can you share a stand-out moment? What about a big disappointment or mistake?

Jett: I have played football since fourth grade. I play linebacker. A stand-out moment for me was my blocked punt sophomore year against Enid because it was my first big impact in a varsity game. My biggest disappointment was that I wasn't able to play most of my junior year because of injury.

TK: What have you learned from playing football that you apply to other parts of your life?

Jett: I've learned to be able to deal with adversity and build relationships with people I'm closest with. I've also learned what it means to push yourself to the max and the time management skills necessary to balance athletics with academics.

TK: What else are you involved in besides football?

Jett: I also play baseball here at Jenks, I'm involved in FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes) as vice president and Jenks Student Council. I also work at Redeemer Church in the kids' ministry.

TK: What are your plans after graduation?

Jett: I plan to either play college football or baseball at the next level and major in some sort of business.

TK: Looking back, what advice would you give to kids starting out in high school?

Jett: Cherish your time because it goes by fast, take risks, take the classroom seriously because you don't want to be playing catch-up in high school.

TK: What advice would you give to the parents of high school kids? What do you wish they knew?

Jett: Let them be involved in as many extracurricular activities as possible and be there to support them because it goes a long way.

TK: What is a fun fact about you?

Jett: I am really good at remembering stats and plays from games, also players and old teams. Ever since I was young, I have been really good at memorizing things like that. I can remember a game play or score from almost any game. **TK**

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR **Cover Kid Contest** **Winners!**

- 1 Amara Bailey
AGE 2
- 2 Trenity Smith
AGE 5
- 3 Ian S. Tisdale
AGE 3



A HUGE THANKS TO
TULSA ER & HOSPITAL
FOR SPONSORING OUR
2023 COVER KID CONTEST,
AND TO EVERYONE WHO
ENTERED AND VOTED!



tulsakids



WE'RE A SOCIAL SPECIES



OUR HERD HAS GROWN.

*Welcome to our new calf. Born on July 26th,
weighing 111 lbs. and standing at 5'7" tall.*

VISIT TODAY | [TULSAZOO.ORG/TICKETS](https://tulsa zoo.org/tickets)