TUSA-AROCKS COM

FOR ACTIVE PAR

SA & SU

IG COMMUNITIES



LYNN HERNANDEZ

WHAT HE S LEARNED IN 10 YEARS

AN INTERVIEW WITH "TWISTERS" CHILD ACTOR AILA GREY DIFFERENT DISCIPLINE APPROACHES: WHAT'S BEST FOR YOU? SPECIAL SECTION: 2024 BABY HANDBOOK



The Beginning of Something Big

Did you know 90% of a child's brain develops in the first five years? At Primrose Schools, we make the most of this important time by helping children grow the mental, physical and emotional skills that will set them up for success in the classroom and beyond.

Schedule a tour today and see our Balanced Learning® approach in action. Now enrolling children ages 6 weeks and older.

Primrose School of South Tulsa 10185 S. 85th E. Ave. Tulsa, OK 74133 918.364.0021 primrosesouthtulsa.com Primrose School of Midtown Tulsa 2835 E. Skelly Dr. Tulsa, OK 74105 918.900.9660 primrosemidtowntulsa.com





I feel like I'm generally friends with all of my grade. I can have a nice conversation with every single person. At Holland Hall, a lot of those typical walls aren't there. I play football, but I'm also in theater and band and Student Council. And every time I joined any of those, I felt welcomed."

- Anson Pohl '24





Schedule a tour. (918) 481-1111 hollandhall.org

Contents.

VOLUME XXXVII | ISSUE 9

GISCIPINE STYLES Gentle Parenting? Positive Discipline? Which Approach is Best for You?







3

EDITOR'S NOTE

4

NEWS & NOTES

8

WHATS GOING ONLINE?

10

BABIES & TODDLERS **Ready, Set, Kindergarten**By Alicia Kobilnyk

12

SCHOOL AGE

Mighty Makers: A New Program to Support Children's Mental Health and Family Well-Being

By Tamecca Rogers, PhD

14

TWEENS & TEENS

Youth Rowing Is Back in Tulsa

By Julie Wenger Watson

16

GET COOKING

Drop-Off Meals for New Parents

By Natalie Mikles

18

SPONSORED CONTENT

A Parent's Guide to Vaping Shape Your Future

20

GREEN COUNTRY GROWN-UP

Lynn Hernandez: Rocking the Dad Life

By Nancy A. Moore

22

COVER FEATURE

Discipline Styles:
Gentle Parenting? Positive
Discipline? Which Approach
is Best for You?

By Natalie Mikles

25

2024 TULSAKIDS'

Baby Handbook

43

Community Calendar

By Tara Rittler

48

Fall Festivals

49

I'M A TULSA KID

Tulsa Actress Aila Grey Makes Big Screen Debut in *Twisters*

By Betty Casey



tulsakids

Volume XXXVII | Number 9

©TK Publishing, Inc. 2024. All Rights Reserved.

TulsaKids is published monthly TK Publishing, Inc. 1622 S. Denver Ave., Tulsa, OK 74119 Phone: 918-582-8504 Fax: 918-583-1366 tulsakids.com



Publisher

Charles Foshee publisher@tulsakids.com

Associate Publisher & Editor-In-Chief

Betty Casey editor@tulsakids.com

Web Editor & Calendar

Tara Rittler tara.rittler@gmail.com

Art Director

Annie Tyndall

Advertising Sales

Amanda Murphy Lindsey Copes

Distribution

Joan Ross

Contributing Writers

Alicia Kobilnyk Tamecca Rogers, PhD Julie Wenger Watson Nancy A. Moore Natalie Mikles Sarah Lyons Joy Carr, MLIS

Articles and advertisements in TulsaKids do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the magazine or TK Publishing, Inc. We do not assume responsibility for statements made advertisers or editorial contributors. The acceptance of advertising TulsaKids does not constitute an endorsement of the products, services, or information. We do not knowingly present any product or service which is fraudulent or misleading in nature.









FALL - A TIME FOR REFLECTION - AND FUN!

Ten years ago, we interviewed Lynn Hernandez about being a DJ. I met Lynn when he asked me to be on a 30-minute community show called "Hot Topic" that ran on Sunday mornings on KMOD. The point of the show was to allow Green Country nonprofits to showcase their organizations. Mayor Dewey Bartlett was a regular on the show. While TulsaKids is not a nonprofit, Lynn liked the fact that he could turn to TulsaKids for things to do with his two young children, especially during the summer and around the holidays. So, I would go on a couple times a year to share those activities.

Ten years later, Lynn is still doing radio at a new station, but even during the months between jobs, he continued to donate his time to nonprofits. He and I did a storytime at Gathering Place and another for Reading Partners. He takes his kids to volunteer. And I would be remiss if I didn't mention his favorite September event — Rocklahoma — during Labor Day weekend in Pryor. (In the first interview, Lynn discourages parents from taking kids, especially to the nighttime shows.)

In talking about children, then and now, Lynn is like most parents — he's proud of their accomplishments. While those milestones were potty training 10 years ago, now they're more related to school or sports successes. And, in both interviews, he highlights the importance of asking for help from professionals when needed. I would bet that not one of us professes to be a perfect parent, so we

are fortunate to have individuals and agencies in Tulsa that can support us on our parenting journey.

Speaking of help, many of us need a better understanding of discipline. There's a lot of advice out there, but how do we identify the best method for our children — and for us? Writer Natalie Mikles talks to Dr. Sara Coffey, a professional at OSU Center for Health Sciences, who helps identify and clarify some of the methods and buzzwords, from gentle parenting to neglectful parenting. There are some things to avoid, but no one size fits every family, or even every child within a family.

For those of you just starting out as parents of infants, welcome to the joyful, miserable and everything-in-between world of being a parent. You'll find a section especially for you this month. We hope that you will refer to TulsaKids often as your local resource for moms, dads, grandparents and caregivers. We support you and celebrate you.

And, while we may be reflecting back ten years ago, we're also looking forward to all the great fall festivals. You can find those in these pages.

Enjoy the beginning of the fall season!



Betty CaseyASSOCIATE PUBLISHER
AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

NEWS & NOTES

Anthem Church Celebrates New Playground

Anthem Church, located at 7777 S. Garnett Rd., recently celebrated the opening of a new playground. "We have quite a bit of land," said Crystal Hahn, creative arts director with the church. "Our plan is to develop it for the community, and the playground is the first step."

The Anthem Church playground is available for anyone who wants to use it. "A lot of times people have the perception that a church is just asking people for something, but we want to develop the land to share with the community," Hahn said. "We wanted to provide a safe environment for families to come together at no cost. Our future dream is to have sports fields, pickle ball courts — the big vision is to have a park here."

The playground is open to the public, and Anthem Church invites everyone to share their community space. The non-denominational Christian church is a ministry for all ages in Tulsa, Broken Arrow and surrounding areas.





University School Welcomes New Director

The University of Tulsa recently announced that Gabriel Fuchs, Ph.D., has been named director of University School, a full school program for academically gifted children from age 3 through eighth grade.

"University School is a remarkable place with a dedicated team of faculty who do excellent work with the young people they serve," said Fuchs, who most recently served as head of the upper school at Wakefield School, an independent, college-preparatory day school serving families across Northern Virginia. "The chance to lead University School presents such a unique opportunity to make use of both my academic background and experience as an independent school educator that exists almost nowhere else."

Fuchs received bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in the classics and served as a teaching associate at Southern Illinois University and The Ohio State University. He began teaching at Wakefield in 2013 and received the school's educator of the year award in 2016 before being named director of academics in 2018.

"Dr. Fuchs has a rich background in, and deep appreciation of, both STEM and the liberal arts," said Brad R. Carson, University of Tulsa president. "USchool is the ideal place for bright, curious children to not only receive an advanced education in science and math, but also acquire a foundation in literature, languages and the arts."

"I look forward to once again being part of a university and am excited to explore the ways that we can build a deeper connection between USchool, UTulsa and the greater Tulsa community. It is my goal to work together with the USchool family to grow it from a hidden gem into a shining star," Fuchs said. "My wife, Michele, our daughter, Fritzi, and I are excited to become part of the community in Tulsa and experience all the arts, culture and activity the city has to offer."

University School was founded in 1982 by The University of Tulsa campus, and led by Pat Hollingsworth, Ed.D., until 2020. Debra Price served as director from 2020 until May 2024. Amber Gates has served as interim director.

To the Editor

Dear TulsaKids,

My name is Madeline Mellen, and I am a student at Bishop Kelley High School. I am taking a summer theology class that discusses Catholic Social Teachings. I have been researching the effects of food insecurity as part of a project on social issues. I chose this topic due to the rising prices of food and how lack of food is one of the widest reaching problems in the world right now. That is why I read your article "School's Out and Hunger Rises: Local Efforts Address Childhood Hunger" by Dr. Tamecca Rogers. This helped inform me in many ways that food insecurity affects people specifically within Oklahoma. I wanted to thank you for publishing this article enlightening people on ways that Tulsa is working to feed those who would otherwise struggle to find it.

Thank you, Madeline Mellen

NEWS & NOTES



Tulsa Named Capital of Route 66

Long known as a central piece of the history of America's Main Street, Tulsa can now officially lay claim to the title of Capital of Route 66®.

The Tulsa Route 66 Commission, an official commission through the City of Tulsa, secured a copyright on the term "Capital of Route 66," leaving no question of Tulsa's significance to the history of the Mother Road. A process that lasted more than two years and involved exhaustive research and surveys led to the final approval from the federal government in April of 2024.

"Tulsa and Route 66 are deeply connected with the Mother Road running through the heart of our city," said Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum. "Route 66 is an integral part of Tulsa's identity, and we've long been known as the Capital of Route 66. To have this official designation is an exciting day for Tulsa, our region and the state of Oklahoma."

Tulsa boasts 28 miles of Route 66 within the city limits, bookended by Gateway Arches on the east and west. Travelers pass by dozens of neon signs that harken back to the days when Route 66 was the main thoroughfare through much of the country. It was born April 30, 1926, when Tulsan Cyrus Stephens Avery sent a telegram from Springfield, Missouri, designating the new highway "U.S. Highway 66."

Tulsa's stretch of Route 66 allows visitors to experience memorials to the road's storied past, including Cyrus Avery Centennial Plaza, and witness emerging attractions that capture the quirk of the route and signal the paving of many years to come. This includes *USA Today*'s #1 Food Hall, Mother Road Market, Decopolis Discovitorium art deco museum and gift shop, Sky Gallery, Buck Atom's Cosmic Curios, which features the 21-foot-tall Buck Atom Muffler Man, and the newest addition, Stella Atom Space Cowgirl.





Local Gymnasts AAU National Champs

London Williams, age 8, and Rainee Goodwin, age 13, both competitive gymnasts with Aim High Academy in Tulsa, won their divisions at the AAU Gymnastics National Championships in Daytona Beach, Florida, in June. Both qualified to represent Oklahoma at the AAU Junior Olympic Games in Greensboro, North Carolina, in July.

London is a Level 3 gymnast and AAU All-Around State Champion. At Nationals she won Vault and All-Around. Rainee, a Level 7, gymnast captured the All-Around title as well as the All-American award.

NEWS & NOTES

TulsaKids Magazine celebrated our 2024 Family Favorites in July with a special reception at the WeStreet Ice Center. Thanks to Balloon Therapy for providing the photo backdrop, and Cookie Mama for the delicious cookies!"

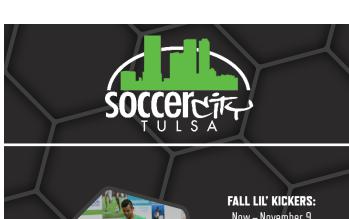


- 1—Gathering Place; 2—Breathe Birth and Wellness; 3—Makenzie Howard Photography;
- 4—Miller Swim School; 5—All Saints Catholic School; 6—Granny and Dot's Early Childhood Development Center; 7—MedWise Urgent Care; 8—YMCA of Greater Tulsa;

tulsakids.com/family-favorites

9—On the Cusp Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics







5817 S. 118th East Ave. | 918.249.0044 www.soccercitytulsa.com

Birthday Parties | Lock-ins | Adult & Youth Leagues





RELAX & TAKE IN THE VIEW

Gathering Place Keystone Ancient Forest Oxley Nature Center Ray Harral Nature Center Turkey Mountain





WHAT'S GOING ONLINE?



CONTESTS & GIVEAWAYS

Get links to the following at tulsakids.com/contests



Cutest Baby Contest

We're celebrating the launch of our 2024 Baby Handbook by bringing back the Cutest Baby Contest!



From Sept. 1-30, submit a photo of your adorable baby (age 2 and under), for a chance to win a large cup filled with a \$100 On the Cusp gift card, a \$25 Kiddlestix gift card and a \$25 QuikTrip gift card!



Favorite Things To Do In Tulsa **Photo Contest**

What is your family's FAVORITE thing to do in Tulsa? Show us by entering our Favorite Things To Do In Tulsa Photo Contest, Sept. **16-Oct. 14!** One lucky winner will receive a Family Membership to Tulsa Air and Space Museum.





DIG Ticket Giveaway

Tulsa Botanic Garden's annual Day in the Garden fundraiser is a fun event for the whole family, happening Sept. 29, 2024. Activities include bubble-making stations, face painting, sno cones, music and more. From Sept. 9-22, enter to win two DIG tickets.





Paw Patrol Live! Ticket Giveaway, sponsored by Paw Patrol Live!

Paw Patrol Live! is coming to the Tulsa PAC Sept. 21-22, and we are giving away two Family 4-Packs for the performance on Sept. 22, 11 a.m. Even better, one of our two winners will receive a VIP Photo Op Experience! Enter from Sept. 1-14.

CONNECT WITH US!

- tulsakids.com
- f tulsakidsmagazine
- o tulsakids
- p tulsakids

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2024 Cover Kid Contest Winners!

- 1 Jemma Ting
- 2 Chioma Ugwa
- 3 Tiana Griffin





THANK YOU TO
TULSA ER & HOSPITAL
FOR SPONSORING OUR
2024 COVER KID CONTEST
AND TO EVERYONE WHO
ENTERED AND VOTED!





tulsakids

Ready, Set, Kindergarten

By Alicia Kobilnyk



S peaking to parents of young children on behalf of early childhood educators everywhere, let me share this: We see you. We see you when you first cross the threshold into our schools, clutching a belly bump, pushing a stroller whose only sign of occupation is a pair of impossibly tiny feet or offering an index finger to a shy little person who hides behind your legs and peeks into rooms with equal parts uncertainty and curiosity. We see you set a box of diapers and a small backpack on our cubbies as you leave, the brief cries of your little one following you out to your car. We see you dragging in a disgruntled little person who will not wear shoes or part with their half-eaten waffle. We see you when you have to chase that same little person down the hall, so eager to get to class that they careen into doorframes and bounce off like ping pong balls. And finally, we see you when you empty the cubby full of drawings, muddy boots and broken McDonald's toys, leading your darling and wild child out of preschool for the last time. Next step, kindergarten.

It seems too easy to compile a list of things your child needs to know before they leave preschool for kindergarten. For me, it feels more relevant to share some things you as a parent might want to know before that day comes and things to remember as you ease into the

brand-new year. In that vein, I asked some of the preschool educators and professionals I know for their feedback. I hope it helps you prepare and, in turn, prepare your children for their next adventures. You can trust us, after all. We see you.

Trust your values

While many parents may not feel ready, we can know we are capable, and we can trust that our children will have a foundation built on connections and values they have learned from family and preschool teachers.

"It is very common for parents to question whether their child is ready for kindergarten," says Shelby Goodrich, assistant director of B'nai Emunah Preschool/former preschool teacher. "But when it comes down to it, the parent also has to be ready for their child to go into kindergarten (and no parent ever is). Knowing what to expect academically and being prepared to sit down to work on schoolwork with your child is important. A child that is kind and curious will always be ready for the next step. Do your best to trust the educators you have chosen and always be an advocate for your child."

Establish routine

Toni Willis, an early childhood educator and nature education coordinator for Philbrook Museum of Art, stresses the importance of routine as children begin kindergarten. Children feel more comfortable if they know what to expect. Having an established drop-off routine can also help children feel more secure.

"Let your child know in advance the steps that will get them to school — waking up, getting dressed, eating breakfast — and develop a drop-off ritual that you and your child create together — for example, two hugs and a kiss — then leave," she says. "Do not linger. When parents linger it sends the signal that the child is not safe without them. This plays right into the Erik Erikson psychosocial stages of development. If allowed, the child can be a self-starter instead of feeling inadequate to be on their own. Remember that growth happens in discomfort."

Build confidence and problem-solving skills

"I think the main worry parents have about their child being ready for kindergarten comes in two parts: Do they know enough, and will they make new friends," says Emily Smith, preschool teacher at B'nai Emunah Preschool. "I try to reassure parents by telling them that children are a lot more adaptable than we give them credit for. When a child starts at a new school, everyone is new. There are things we can do and say to help our kids feel more confident in a new

environment. Visit the school or the classroom and meet the teacher. Also, role play with your kids how to introduce themselves and enter into play with others. How can you be a good friend to someone?"

SBYTOVAMN/GETTY

Emily also encourages parents to help their children become curious learners and to ask questions as they begin their elementary school years.

"I remember reading somewhere that instead of asking your child 'What did you learn today?' you ask, 'What questions did you ask today?" she says. "I think about this a lot when I feel that anxiety creeping up on myself or in the language of a parent with concerns about their child. It is a good reminder that our kids have so many tools already to be the best problem solver and active participant in their own educational journey. Sometimes they just need a little reminder from us to keep asking those great questions and to have the confidence to do so."

Transitioning from preschool to kindergarten is a big leap, but trust yourself and your child with curiosity, kindness — and a little preparation. TK

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





Our dream for the Anthem Playground is for it to be a safe, fun place for your family and friends to make great memories! We believe God has given us our land to be a blessing to our community and we want you to know that you are welcome here! **Come play anytime!**

YOU ARE INVITED

ANTHEM PLAYGROUND GRAND OPENING

September 21, 2024 • 10:00am - 2:00pm

FOOD TRUCKS

HOT TOAST MUSIC

INFLATABLES

FACE PAINTING

+MORE!

weareanthem.church/playground





Anthem Church 7777 S. Garnett Rd. Broken Arrow, OK 74012

Mighty Makers:

A New Program to Support Children's Mental Health and Family Well-Being

By Tamecca Rogers, PhD



n the heart of Tulsa, Parkside Psychiatric Hospital & Clinic is making an impact on children's mental health and family well-being with the launch of the Mighty Makers program. This innovative early intervention therapy is designed to help children ages 5-12 effectively manage their emotions, with the support of their families. Offering a comprehensive approach that includes family therapy sessions, advanced biofeedback technology, and the interactive Mightier app, Mighty Makers is a much-needed resource for the community—one that comes at no cost to the families involved.

A Community-Driven Initiative

The Mighty Makers program was born from a need observed in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. "We noticed unique challenges with children in the area," says Mighty Makers Program Therapist Denise Gogolin. "More and more children and families were really struggling, and we felt compelled to act."

Parkside's response was not just aligned with its mission to support mental health in the community but marked a significant shift towards focusing more intensely on the needs of children. The program is set to be a corner-stone of Parkside's ongoing efforts to expand services for younger populations.

"We're moving more in the direction of children, and there's a lot more in the works to build on this initiative," Gogolin explains, reflecting the organization's long-term vision for enhancing mental health services for the youngest members of the community.

Cutting-Edge Technology Meets Compassionate Care

Its use of biofeedback technology is at the heart of the Mighty Makers program. This tool is rapidly gaining recognition for its effectiveness in helping children recognize and manage their emotions in realtime. "A lot of parents will tell us, "These outbursts just come out of nowhere,' but they don't," Gogolin says. "The great thing about biofeedback is that it helps both the child and the therapist identify the early signs of emotional distress."

Through biofeedback, children are connected to monitors — such as a pulse oximeter or a heart-rate sensor — that detect physiological

changes as they become more stressed. This real-time feedback allows children to become aware of their emotional state before it escalates, which is critical for developing self-regulation skills. "Over time, they start to notice these changes in their own body without the need for technology, which is incredibly empowering," Gogolin says.

The program also integrates the Mightier app, a product developed at Harvard Medical School and Boston Children's Hospital, which gamifies emotion regulation. Children play video games that adapt in difficulty based on their physiological responses, teaching them how to calm down in a fun and engaging way. Although Gogolin focused primarily on biofeedback in our conversation, the combination of these technologies creates a powerful toolkit for emotional regulation.

Accessibility and Inclusivity at the Core

One of the most remarkable aspects of the Mighty Makers program is its accessibility. The program is entirely free, removing financial barriers that often prevent families from seeking the mental health support their

children need. "Our program is 100 percent free," Gogolin emphasizes. "It's not even through insurance. We've had some magnificent people in Tulsa willing to provide the funds for it, and we're really excited about it."

This community-driven funding model reflects the collective commitment of Tulsa's residents to addressing the mental health challenges facing local children. By ensuring that financial constraints do not hinder participation, Mighty Makers is positioned to reach a diverse range of families across the city.

Building Stronger Families and Healthier Futures

The goals of the Mighty Makers program extend beyond individual therapy sessions. A key component is family therapy, which is integrated into the program to enhance communication and emotional regulation within the home. "We want to see less verbal and physical outbursts and better family communication," Gogolin explains. "Family therapy is part of the program, where we focus on communication, self-regulation as a family, and learning life skills."



Through these sessions, families learn to understand and manage their emotions together, creating a supportive environment where children can thrive. "Maybe we're misinterpreting what mom is saying because of her tone, or maybe mom is tired. Learning those kinds of skills is crucial," Gogolin notes. The program's emphasis on holistic family involvement ensures that the benefits of therapy extend far beyond the clinic.

A New Hope for Tulsa Families

Although the program is still in its early stages, the anticipation and optimism surrounding Mighty Makers are palpable. "The families are excited, and they have hope," Gogolin shares. "I'm hopeful, too. We're just starting, but there's a lot of excitement around it."

Gogolin's passion for biofeedback and her dedication to helping children and their families navigate emotional challenges are evident. "Biofeedback is extra from talk therapy," she says. "It's teaching them in real-time how to notice their emotions, not just going back over the week's events. It's right here, right now."

How to Get Involved

The Mighty Makers program is now accepting participants. Sessions are hosted weekly at Parkside's Outpatient Clinic, located at 1239 S. Trenton Ave. in Tulsa. Families interested in enrolling their children can do so by contacting Denise Gogolin directly at 918.586.4291 or via email at degogolin@parksideinc.org.

This initiative represents a significant step forward in supporting children's mental health in Tulsa. By providing free, accessible, and effective early intervention, Mighty Makers is not only helping children manage their emotions but also fostering stronger, more resilient families. As the program grows, it holds the promise of making a lasting impact on the Tulsa community—one child and one family at a time. TK

Dr. Tamecca Rogers serves as Director of Student Access and Success at Tulsa Technology Center. An award-winning author and filmmaker, she is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion in all her endeavors.

PJ'S CORNER

Easing Back-to-School Stress





Q&A with **Julie Marie Burnshire, LCSW**

Q: What are some common stressors for kids as they return to school?

Burnshire: They are transitioning to different sleep schedules, to understanding what's expected of them, to knowing when their lunchtime is, etc. Returning to a school schedule can be a little rough for kids because their system is having to figure out how to acclimate back into 150+ days of school.

Q: What can parents do to create a calm home environment as they go through this transition?

Burnshire: Tune in to see what helps your child with calm. It might be using the five senses -- a favorite candle smell, their favorite blanket or animal, having a snack ready for them. Create time where you can connect. You might say, "Is there one thing you can tell me about your day?" and then let the conversation expand from there.

For less stressful mornings, set things up for kids ahead of time. Have them help pick out an outfit and put out their backpack.

Some kids like a morning checklist to complete. They feel satisfaction that they can do it on their own.

Q: What are some signs of stress or anxiety to watch for, especially when kids may not talk about it?

Burnshire: Play therapists say, "When words fail, play speaks." Watch for non-verbal communication cues.

Kids may be more chatty than usual, interruptive, not eating well, seeming restless, wanting that drink of water after you've put them to bed for the fourth time. Rather than trying to stop the behavior, meet the behavior where it is. You might say, "I notice that you're asking a lot of questions lately or that you seem more hungry than usual. Can you tell me more about what's going on?"

Q: Do you have other tips regarding children's mental health as they ease back into the school year?

Burnshire: Stay curious with them. All behavior is communication, so stay tuned in to behavior as being a kid's form of communication

Connect with them on their level. Sit down and play Legos or games with them. The distraction of other activities may help open that window to get in and hear what's going on.

A book I highly recommend is "The Whole-Brain Child." It can help parents understand how children communicate in a very different way than we do and gives tips on how to connect with them.

We often ask kids to come up to the land where we are, but they're only the age they are, and that's as high as they can go. Meet children where they are.

For the complete interview, visit **TulsaKids.com**If you have questions for one of the Saint Francis Children's
Physicians to answer, please email **editor@tulsakids.com**



6161 South Yale Ave, Tulsa, OK | 918.502.6000
SAINTFRANCIS.COM/CHILDRENS

Youth Rowing Is Back in Tulsa

With the opening of Zink Lake, Tulsa Youth Rowing Association returns to the Arkansas River.

By Julie Wenger Watson



n Labor Day Weekend, the city celebrates the long-awaited opening of Zink Lake and the new Williams Crossing Pedestrian Bridge. For Tulsa Youth Rowing Association (TYRA), the event signals the program's return to the Arkansas River after several years training on the Verdigris River in Catoosa during the construction of the dam, lake, bridge and associated infrastructure

"We're super excited about getting back on the Arkansas and being right there in the downtown-midtown area with accessibility to potential athletes and their families," says TYRA president, Joe Pace.

The youth rowing program began in 1989 under "Tulsa Rowing Club," which was created by Tulsa philanthropist and former rower, Dr. Charles Oliphant. TYRA became its own independent organization in 2013. The nonprofit teaches youth (ages 13-18) rowing fundamentals,

while providing opportunities to compete in races, or "regattas," as they're known in the boat-racing world

In addition to improving physical fitness, the sport of rowing can teach kids life skills like teamwork, resilience, self-management and accountability. Pace and his wife, Jenny, TYRA's vice-president, have two sons who both participate in the program. They believe the rowing program and its community has been a positive influence on their kids

"One of the reasons Jen and I have such a heart for it and why it's been such a blessing for us is that we love that both of our boys are part of the team," Pace says.

Before discovering rowing, the Paces' eldest son had tried a number of sports.

"We looked at everything, and when we came across this, he connected with it, and he just thrived," Pace says. "It's a place where all these kids come together, and it's inclusive and close-knit."

Beyond the immediate benefits to the rowers, Pace sees the sport as an investment in their future.

"The college opportunities are absolutely phenomenal. We graduated five last year. Three had offers of full-ride or partial collegiate rowing scholarships," he notes. "The success rate and the opportunity to continue rowing past high school at a collegiate level and help advance your career and life – that assistance is just huge for some of these kids. If we can create a pathway for future success in in these kids' lives, that's really what we're excited about."

During a normal season, which basically matches the school year, the program's two-hour practices can be as frequent as six days a week. The extra time required to commute to Catoosa to train while the dam and bridge were under construction on the Arkansas River reduced the average number of program participants by half. Pace anticipates plenty of growth once TYRA returns to its base this month at the boathouse it shares with Tulsa Rowing Club, near 21st St. and Jackson Ave. Both Pace and his wife are looking forward to helping rebuild the program.

"I feel frazzled sometimes, but you know what? It's worth it for these kids," he says. "And not just my kids, it's about all these kids. I love watching them grow and progress and develop."

For more information, visit okrowing.org. **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.



BIG DAM PARTY

Celebrate the opening of Zink Lake and Whitewater Flume and the Williams Crossing Pedestrian Bridge at the Big Dam Party **August 30–September 2**. The free, all-ages Labor Day Weekend event takes place in and around the Gathering Place's expanded riverfront lawn and includes the Big Dam Run, a one-mile fun run, and a concert from Hanson (8/31), along with the return of the Great Raft Race (9/2).

Arts and crafts, additional live entertainment, the world's largest rubber duck, kayaking competitions, sailboat races and rowing regattas are all on the agenda for the weekend. Actor and musician C. Thomas Howell, who played "Ponyboy Curtis" in Francis Ford Coppola's 1983 movie adaptation of S.E. Hinton's 1967 novel, *The Outsiders*, will participate in "The Outsiders Experience," providing live commentary during a screening of the movie. Food trucks will be onsite, and commemorative merchandise from Mythic Press is available for purchase. Although there is no cost to participate in the scheduled events, RSVPs are encouraged.

Visit bigdamparty.com for more information.

Meals that give back.



RESTAURANT WEEK

September 6-15

Celebrate Tulsa's best restaurants **September 6-15** during TulsaPeople's 18th annual Restaurant Week benefitting the **Food Bank of Oklahoma's Food for Kids programs!** Many of Tulsa's best restaurants will participate in Restaurant Week by offering a special prix fixe menu, menu items, cocktails or their regular menus which will include a donation to the Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma! Plus, all donations will be matched up to \$25,000 by the George Kaiser Family Foundation.

PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS INCLUDE:*

Bar Serra • Bishop Quigley • Bull in the Alley • Cafe Olé • Elgin Park Brewery
Isla's Kitchen • Jimmy's Chophouse • Juniper • Maple Ridge Grocer
McNellie's South City • Melting Pot • Misfit Kitchen • MK Bistro
Mr. Kim's • Prhyme • Rib Crib • Ridge Cantina • Ridge Grill • Roka
Sisserou's Caribbean Restaurant & Catering • Society Burger • The Pump Bar Tulsa
The Tavern • Ti Amo Ristorante Italiano • Ti Amo Ristorante Italiano Downtown
Wild Fork • Yokozuna (Blue Dome) • Yokozuna Yale

*As of 8/1/24

PRESENTING SPONSORS

TulsaPeople

GEORGE KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

RESTAURANT WEEK SPONSORS

Argonaut Private Equity
Nadel & Gussman

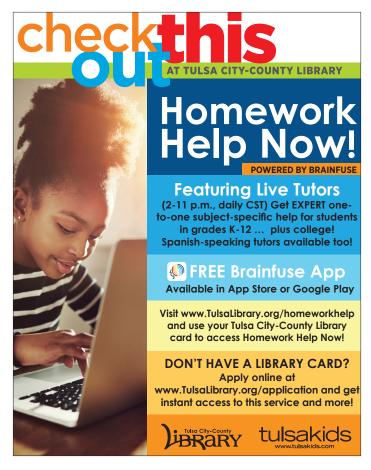
Curtis Restaurant Supply The Bama Companies, Inc.

BENEFITTING

TEXT FOODBANK



VISIT
TULSAPEOPLE.COM
FOR DETAILS
AND MENUS!





Drop-Off Meals for New Parents

By Natalie Mikles



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

he blurry newborn days can be blissful, stressful, challenging and joyful. Sometimes they can be all of those things in one day. One thing's for sure—you will want to spend those days taking care of your baby and yourself and not worrying about what's for dinner.

This is where family, friends and neighbors can help. When they ask, "What can I do? Can I bring over dinner?" say yes. People so often want to help and support new moms and dads but don't always know how. When help is offered, take it. Letting them help with the laundry, watch your other children or bring a meal will make them feel happy to help and take something off your plate in those first days with your newborn.

Those who have already been through those newborn days know what new parents may need. Think back to what you would have loved for a friend to bring to your doorstep. What meal would you have loved? Maybe it's a casserole. Maybe it's a bag of goodies from Trader Joe's.

One thing to remember — though some parents want a little company or someone to talk to, others need space in those early baby days. For many families, it takes a bit to figure out a new normal, including getting into a routine and figuring out a schedule. That can be difficult to do with a revolving door of well-meaning friends and family dropping by. So, sending a text that dinner is on the doorstep is just fine!

Casseroles and lasagnas are great! But new parents will also love something a little different. Bring this sheet-pan dinner over in a disposable aluminum pan so parents don't have to worry about washing and returning a dish afterward.

Sheet Pan Fajitas

SERVES 4-6

- 1 red, 1 green and 1 yellow bell pepper, sliced into strips
- 1 yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 1 1/2 pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Juice of 1 lime
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro
- On the side: Small flour tortillas, sour cream, sliced avocado, salsa, shredded cheese
- Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Spread sliced peppers and onions evenly on baking sheet.
- In a bowl, combine chicken with garlic, olive oil, chili powder, paprika, cumin, garlic powder, oregano, salt and pepper.
- Cook for 15–20 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Toss chicken and vegetables together. Squeeze with lime juice and sprinkle with cilantro.

Note: Drop off these fajitas to new parents along with a package of tortillas and toppings like avocado, salsa, sour cream and cheese.

Sandwiches may seem too simple to give, but don't discount them! These oven-baked sandwiches make a great lunch, dinner or snack. They can be eaten with one hand while holding the baby and can be eaten warm or cold. Bring this to new parents along with some sliced fruit.

Hot Ham and Cheese Sliders

- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 1/2 teaspoons
 Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds
- 24 Hawaiian rolls or slider buns
- 1 pound thinly sliced cooked deli ham
- 1 pound thinly sliced Swiss cheese
- 1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9-by-13-inch baking dish.
- Combine butter, Dijon mustard, Worcestershire sauce and poppy seeds in a bowl.
- 3. Take the tops off the rolls, and place roll bottoms in baking dish. Layer with half the ham, half the cheese, then the other half of ham and cheese. Top with Hawaiian roll tops.
- 4. Brush butter mixture over the tops of the rolls. Bake until lightly browned and the cheese has melted, about 20 minutes.

If you're offended by canned cream soups, avert your eyes. Sometimes nothing beats a comfort food casserole. You can use rotisserie chicken to cut down the cooking time.

Chicken Noodle Casserole

- 1 can (about 10 ounces) condensed cream of chicken soup
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 cups cubed cooked chicken
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1/4 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese, divided
- 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese, divided
- 6 ounces egg noodles, cooked and drained
- **1.** In a large bowl, combine the soup, mayonnaise and lemon juice. Stir

- in the chicken, onion, peppers, 1/2 cup Monterey Jack cheese and 1/2 cup cheddar cheese. Add noodles and toss to coat.
- Pour mixture into a 2-quart baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining cheeses. Bake until cheese is melted, about 10 minutes longer.

Note: If the new parents have already been gifted plenty of food, you can make and freeze this casserole. Drop off the frozen casserole with this baking note: Partially thaw frozen casserole in refrigerator overnight. Place on countertop while preheating oven to 350 degrees. Bake 45 minutes or until center of casserole reaches 165 degrees. You may need to bake longer until fully warmed through.

It's not just dinner that new parents need. Breakfast and snacks are also much appreciated.

Coffee Cake Muffins

MAKES ABOUT 15 MUFFINS

Streusel:

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans

Muffins

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
 In a small bowl, combine streusel toppings until crumbly. Set aside.
- In a large bowl, cream together butter and sugars until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until well combined. Mix in milk and vanilla. Add flour, baking powder and salt, mixing just until combined.
- 3. Line a muffin pan with paper baking cups. Fill each 1/4 full with batter. Drop 1 tablespoon streusel into center of each muffin cup, then cover with batter. Sprinkle each with the remaining streusel. Bake about 20 minutes or until a pick inserted in the center comes out clean. TK



Since 2016, we've been partnering with public schools to provide extra support for students and families based on their individual needs. Students get one-on-one help with behavioral issues while remaining in school and the teachers and staff get the support they need to do their jobs, bringing positive change to the entire school. Want to learn more? Visit grandmh.com/schools.

"I can't even begin to put into words how important this program is."

— Kristen T., Parent

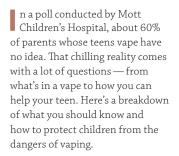


LEADING CHANGE. ADVANCING CARE.

A Parent's Guide to Vaping

Talk About Tobacco

FROM TOBACCO STOPS WITH ME



Here's Why Vapes Are Popular

According to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, more than one in five Oklahoma high school students report vaping, and most of them started with a flavored product. Over 15,000 flavors are on the market aimed at addicting young people. Vaping often appears in media, which makes kids think it's safe. The tobacco industry has also made vaping more enticing with discounted prices, event sponsorships, techinspired designs and false truths about mental health benefits.

Despite laws prohibiting vape sales to minors, teens find ways to get the product. Some online vape retailers have lax age-verification processes, and some even boast "discreet shipping" to conceal vape purchases. Teens can also get vapes from peers or other acquaintances who sell for a profit.

Vaping Is Dangerous

Many people don't realize the most popular vapes are made and distributed by tobacco companies. Like any tobacco product, vaping poses significant health risks, especially for young people. One big risk? Addiction — most vapes contain high levels of nicotine and teens who vape are nearly seven times as likely to use cigarettes later in life. Vapes also contain several harmful chemicals known to cause cancer.

The Health Risks of Vaping

Vaping can cause immediate health issues. Lung irritation may trigger wheezing, asthma attacks and shortness of breath. It also causes dry mouth, which can lead to dental issues. Long-term vaping can lead to respiratory issues, an increased risk of cardiovascular problems, gastrointestinal and kidney disorders, reproductive health issues and infertility, resistance to chemotherapy and other medicines, and of course, addiction.

Nicotine from vapes can also disrupt teens' mental health significantly — worsening anxiety, depression, impulsivity and learning abilities. The tobacco industry often uses mental health to sell their products. The numbers don't lie: Four out of five teens try

vaping to cope with depression or anxiety. However, nicotine actually makes mental health struggles worse.

Common Types of Vapes

Vapes come in so many shapes and sizes. Pod-based vapes are small, often USB-shaped devices that look like phone chargers, hard drives or adaptors. Pens are ultra-sleek and easy to hide in school supplies. Disposable vapes are designed with discretion in mind, often resembling highlighters, ear-pod cases or toys.

Signs Your Teen Is Vaping

Vaping can affect teens physically and mentally. Watch for physical signs like nosebleeds, nausea, headaches, dehydration, a constant cough, mouth sores or skin changes. Unexplained sweet scents, strange batteries or chargers and unmarked packaging may also be warning signs. As teens begin to struggle with nicotine addiction, their behaviors and routines may change as well. They may experience intense mood swings, oversleep, struggle to concentrate, lose interest in hobbies or sports and spend more money than usual.

Note: Even if your teen exhibits one or more of these symptoms, don't immediately assume they're vaping. Hormones, stress and development can all present similar changes. Talk with them before making accusations.



There are other nicotine products on the market growing in popularity among teens. Cigarette use has declined over the decades but still poses a threat. While smokeless tobacco, like dip or chew, is more common in rural areas, nicotine pouches — such as Zyn and on! — are becoming more popular everywhere. These pouches contain high levels of nicotine that put youth at risk of addiction and other health issues.

Talk With Your Kids

One of the best things you can do to help your children remain tobacco free is a simple conversation. Having open and honest talks about vaping can help combat the temptation teens face. Not sure how to start the conversation? Find age-specific conversation starters to open the dialogue and guides to help keep the conversation going at TalkAboutTobacco.com from Tobacco Stops With Me. There, you can explore options to prevent vaping and find judgment-free support.

Remember: You play an important role in protecting your child from a lifetime of addiction. TK









Box mod





Lynn Hernandez:

Rocking the Dad Life

By Nancy A. Moore



Besides working as the DJ on 103.3 The Eagle and K95.5 KRMG, Lynn is talking about local music on Fox 23.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MAKENZIE HOWARD.

t's been a decade since our last interview with local radio/TV personality and TulsaKids "Dad Rocks" blogger Lynn Hernandez, and a lot has changed over the years. His career, like many others, has evolved and changed substantially due to technology and social media. We'll catch you up with his life as a single dad raising two kids, some career updates and what he's currently working on.

TK: What has changed for you since 2014 when you were first interviewed for TulsaKids?

Lynn: A lot has changed over the years, including my career and family. My kids are now older. My son, Atticus, is 14 and my daughter, Angel, is 10. Raising them has been a lot of fun. They are both doing great! Personally, I have lost both my parents and my older brother, so that has been difficult because they were supportive in so many ways.

TK: What have you learned about being a dad over the past 10 years?

Lynn: Being a single dad is hard! But what I've learned over these last 10 years is to seek help! Especially if you're like me and you don't have any family or many friends in town that can help. What makes being a dad even harder is when [you have a difficult relationship with the other parent]. I've been through many parenting classes, countless therapists, multiple judges, several family law attorneys, one Guardian ad Litem, and a couple parenting coordinators, and the one thing they all have in common is they tell both parents to be polite and courteous to each other.

Like many divorced parents, I would get frustrated when things weren't going well, but it's best for kids and for yourself to try to work through things outside the court system, if possible. Working it out in court means legal fees, missed work and countless sleepless nights.

TK: Shed light into how your industry has changed over the years and the impact on you and your family.

Lynn: The pandemic changed a lot of things. Even though I was successful in radio at KMOD, during the pandemic, after 16 years of being there, I was let go. I immediately reached out to the competition, but the entire industry was on a hiring freeze. It took a year before they had an opening, and then I was able to join a new station in Tulsa. I'm the DJ on 103.3 The Eagle and K95.5 KRMG. I've also got a spot on TV with Fox23.

Technology has enabled me to be in other markets besides Tulsa; through the magic of radio, I'm on the 99.5 KISS Rocks radio station in San Antonio now and looking at expanding in other markets as well.

TK: Biggest joys as a dad?

Lynn: Just watching my kids grow up and hit their milestones in life. I'm very blessed that they are both doing so well. I love being a dad. I hope and pray that the milestones will continue to be good for them.

TK: You have one tattoo. What is it and what does it signify?

Lynn: The tattoo artist who gave me a tattoo did it while I was on the air, and I talked about it while getting the words "Mi Familia" on my arm. I have always highly regarded the family unit and with my love of music, "Mi Familia" by the band Vallejo seemed appropriate.

TK: What is one of your biggest challenges of being a single dad?

Lynn: Co-parenting can be challenging, although I have found an App that has helped with communication with the other parents called My Family Wizard. I highly recommend it.

I've shared some about my son's struggles with friends and school in my blog. Don't give up on your kids. Since my son is part Cherokee, we found a boarding school in Kingston, OK, that has been really great for him. Shout out to the Chickasaw Children's Village for the support.

TK: As a face of Rocklahoma and a person in the music industry, can you talk about how people might perceive you as a parent? What kinds of questions/comments have you heard?

Lynn: I was given the moniker The Unoffical Mayor of Rocklahoma and it stuck. I love being a part of this event and looking forward to the upcoming event in September.

TK: What do your kids think about meeting the musicians and celebrities that you meet?

Lynn: My kids will go back and meet the band, but they are so bored. They don't really get into all that.

TK: Do you have any regrets about your parenting?

Lynn: No, I don't. I've done my best. I think that's all we can do.

TK: What would your kids say about you as a dad?

Lynn: I've heard my daughter say that she loves how her dad has things planned and gets outside. My kids will tell you that Dad likes to go do stuff.



If you read my Dad Rocks TulsaKids blog, you'll see my involvement around the community. I believe it's really important to take the time to give back. I've made an effort to take my kids with me to different fundraising events because I want them to value their community and help others. I remember my dad taking me to volunteer and help others out. I didn't love it at the time, but now I look back, and it was impactful.

TK: Tell us about the Tulsa Rocks podcast. How did it start and how is it going?

Lynn: After I left KMOD, a friend mentioned that I should start a podcast. I wondered if I could transfer everything I did as a public affairs director and make it into my own thing. Shortly after our conversation, someone contacted me about doing a blood drive, and when I said I wasn't working at the radio station, she asked if I

could still do the interview on my Facebook page. We had the interview, and it went really well.

My son helped me come up with the name, Tulsa Rocks. It has really taken off, and I enjoy it; I even have merchandise now. It's about helping to raise funds for everything that makes Tulsa rock.

TK: What have you learned over the years?

Lynn: Don't burn a bridge. You never know who you're going to run into again. Get out there and build bridges. Don't be afraid to reach out to others and network.

TK: What would be your advice for new parents?

Lynn: Reach out for advice.
Sometimes guys want to try and figure it out. I reached out to many different people for advice and have used something from what I learned from everyone I reached

out to. Don't be afraid to ask.

TK: What do you share in your TulsaKids blog?

Lynn: I talk a lot about being a dad and my life on the radio. I also live a lot of my life on social media. Even my dog Domino has his own TikTok account!

TK: What has been a cool moment for you in your career?

Lynn: I've listened to the band Rush since I was a kid, and I've seen them in concert more than any other band. I got to interview them, and it was such a cool experience.

TK: What's next for you?

Lynn: Continuing to do what I enjoy and what I have a passion for!

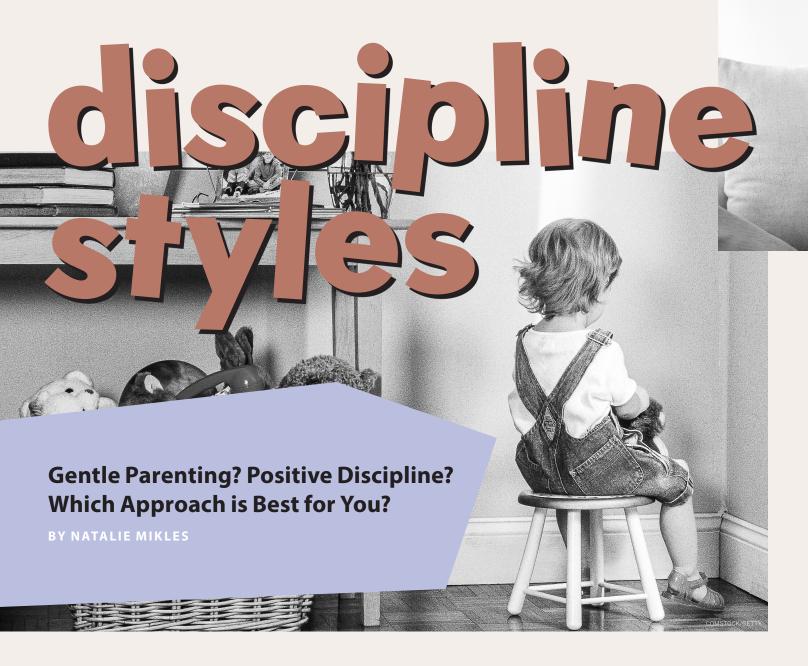
Personally, making sure my kids continue to grow up well. My son is getting into sports, and my daughter is expanding her interests as well. Professionally, I'm looking at expanding what I'm currently

doing on 103.3 The Eagle, K95.5 and 102.3 KRMG — and the new spot on Fox 23 talking about some of the fun Tulsa events coming up each weekend. I'm also looking to expand my footprint outside of Tulsa. Through technology and the magic of radio, I can easily be in other areas. **TK**

Lynn reveals who wore his "Tulsa Rocks" hat during an encore of their performance as well as the book he has on his nightstand on the Sharing Passion and Purpose Podcast. Listen on your favorite podcasting app or directly at SharingPassionandPurpose.com.

Check Lynn out online: tulsakids.com/dads-rock; Tulsa-Rocks.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.



the same week Jennifer Mullin

found out she was pregnant, she ordered a book on positive parenting. She knew she wanted to parent her son differently than she had been raised, so she read books and blogs, soaking in as much information as she could about positive discipline and gentle parenting.

"I wanted my son to love me and trust me — and not be scared of me," she said.

Mullin, a Tulsa mom of a now 6-year-old boy, said she's applied a lot of what she read in those early days, but she continues to adapt her parenting and discipline style as her son grows.

Approaches to discipline have changed a great deal over the years as each new generation of

parents works to do what they believe is best for

You can find pros and cons to most styles of discipline, though neglectful or uninvolved parenting is wrong across the board. But other styles have some wiggle room when it comes to what will work for your family.

Dr. Sara Coffey, Anne and Henry Zarrow Endowed Leadership Chair of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at OSU Center for Health Sciences, also serves as the medical director for the Oklahoma Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health Access Program.

Coffey said much has changed since the days when "spare the rod, spoil the child" was the norm. This type of authoritarian parenting takes away the parents' opportunity to teach and guide a child through problematic behavior.

Gentle parenting, on the other hand, seeks to understand the child's feelings and reasonings.

"Gentle parenting, in my experience, is based on mutual respect," Coffey said. "There's an emphasis on the connection between parent and child."

And like all things, the pendulum can swing too far with this approach, particularly when parents let their kids' behavior go unchecked.

"Parenting is one of the hardest jobs any of us will do. And sometimes in these movements we don't acknowledge the role of the caregiver," Coffey said. "It's important to know, 'Sometimes I miss the mark, and guess what? That's OK."



changing perspectives

Science, a conscious desire to "do better" and our intuition have all led to changes in how some Millennials and Gen-X families parent.

Conversations about "spoiling the baby," that decades ago were common, are today antiquated.

"Even in the world of mental health, we used to think because babies don't have language it doesn't matter as much. But there's so much data to show how important those early life experiences are," Coffey said.

One of the strengths and tenants of the gentle parenting approach is connection. Coffey said that connection and understanding between parent and child is something parents can lean on.

"[In parenting] it can feel like you're doing OK and then you lose your footing. That's where the relationship really matters," Coffey said.

She explained that the phrase "it's not the rupture, it's the repair" is often used in early childhood circles. It's a wonderful way of understanding that when things go wrong, it's important to leave space for your child to apologize or for you to apologize to your child. Having a firm foundation, and the tools to work through problems, can help with that repair after a meltdown, outburst or argument.

Though gentle parenting or authoritative parenting are today considered the healthiest parenting styles, Coffey said that could change in 20 to 30 years. And when a new, niche style of parenting comes into play, parents will have to decide if it works for them.

No one parenting style will fit every family, an idea to which Coffey can personally attest.

"I have two children who are completely different. I have to attend to their individual needs," she said.

And rather than judging another parent for what may seem like bad parenting, Coffey said it's important to not shame or make others feel bad

"We have to recognize we all have our own journeys," she said.

Mullin understands that sentiment, noting that she's no longer angry with her parents for her strict upbringing, but she also knows she wants better for her son.

parenting styles

Three main parenting styles were established by psychologist Diana Baumrind in the 1960s. In the 1980s, a fourth category (neglectful) was added.

AUTHORITARIAN This strict, control-based form of parenting is heavy on punishment and weak on empathy. Children in authoritarian families are often deprived of affection and attention and are resentful of their parents when they become adults.

AUTHORITATIVE Not to be confused with the authoritarian model, authoritative parenting balances rules and independence. Authoritative parenting allows for children to express their opinions and for parents to set expectations for their children to behave. It offers a warm, encouraging environment for kids.

PERMISSIVE Indulgent or permissive parenting is the opposite of authoritarian parenting. It allows children to set their own rules, with a lack of family structure. Children often end up rebellious and with little self-control.

NEGLECTFUL As the name implies, neglectful parenting refers to parents who have little involvement in their children's lives. They are often detached from their children's social and emotional lives. Children in neglectful homes are more susceptible to depression and delinquent behavior.

Other Parenting Styles

Beyond the parenting styles recognized by the American Psychological Association, there are other popular and niche parenting styles.

ATTACHMENT PARENTING This parenting style is popular with some parents of babies and toddlers. It promotes the idea of bonding and closeness between babies and parents, including through baby wearing, breastfeeding and, sometimes, bed sharing. It can sometimes cause stress or anxiety to parents who feel guilt for needing or wanting time away from their babies.

GENTLE PARENTING Similar to authoritative parenting, gentle parenting is the updated approach to this style that sets rules but provides a loving environment for kids. Gentle parenting often involves validating a child's emotions without punishing poor behaviors. When followed too loosely, kids can end up being the ones in charge, leaving them feeling less secure.

HELICOPTER PARENTING Anxious parents may unknowingly fall into this style of parenting where they often jump in to help their children solve problems. This type of parenting can sometimes cross the line from protection to intrusiveness, leading to either resentment or a co-dependent relationship.

FREE-RANGE PARENTING Some parents have turned to free-range parenting in defiance of helicopter or attachment parenting. Others simply don't mind giving their children more independence, which could mean riding their bikes in the neighborhood by themselves or letting them play in the back yard while you are inside. Free-range is not the same as neglectful because free-range parents put an emphasis on the emotional attachment with their children while giving them more physical space to roam free.

Two hospitals named the best for maternity care.

One more reason to smile.

Oklahoma is our home, and we believe all our friends, families and communities deserve the best. This is why two of our hospitals have been named the best for maternity care.

Visit us at saintfrancis.com







Your Growing Baby

STARTING SOLIDS

BUILD A READER @ TCCL

PROTECT YOUR PELVIC FLOOR

COMMON PREGNANCY CONCERNS



Your Child's Noctor

5 TIPS FOR CHOOSING A PEDIATRICIAN

BY SARAH LYONS

After your baby is born, you will visit the pediatrician often. In the first year, your baby will have seven well visits. Studies show that first-time parents may visit their child's pediatrician up to 16 times before baby's first birthday.

Your child's doctor plays an important role in their life and, therefore, you will need to find a healthcare provider that is a good fit for you and your baby.

Here are some tips to get you started on your search:

START WITH RECOMMENDATIONS

As a first-time parent, or a family that has just relocated, it is hard to know where to begin your search for a pediatrician.

"I asked other moms for recommendations. It's a great way to see what names came up repeatedly," says Jill Miller.

Stacy Cook, nurse and mom of three, suggests asking your OB-GYN for a recommendation. "I figured if they were good enough for my doctor's kids then they were good enough for mine."

Some parents, like Nathan and Wendy Hladky of Overland Park, KS, chose the same primary care doctor for the whole family. "All four of us use the same doctor. It is super convenient," Nathan says.

COVER THE BASICS

First you must compare your list of candidates with your insurance policy. "I look to see what providers are in our network and then start looking for reviews of those doctors online. I was able to find a doctor that was better than we ever expected," says Stephanie Beaurdry, mom of two.

Check to see if the doctor is certified by the American Board of Pediatrics. If you choose a family doctor, ask if the doctor is certified by the American Board of Family Medicine. Family doctors are trained to treat patients of all ages, including children, but they do not have a specialty in pediatrics.

Next, consider the basic office information that can be found online or with a quick phone call. What are the office hours? Do they have walk-in hours? Will the doctor visit the hospital where you will deliver your baby? What hospital will your child be admitted to if needed? Is the office location convenient to your home, work, school and daycare? Take these things into consideration as you narrow down your list.

VISIT THE OFFICE

To find out if you feel comfortable in the pediatrician's office, you will have to take a tour. Call the office and ask if they have times set up for potential patients to visit the office or if you would need to make an appointment. Ask if you can interview the doctor at the same time. Remember to ask if there is a charge for visiting. Verify with your insurance company to see if the cost would be covered or if you would be responsible for the fees.

When visiting the office, be aware of the overall environment. Take into consideration if the office staff is courteous, polite and willing to help. Is the office clean and inviting? Was parking convenient? Do they have separate sick and well waiting areas? Take all of these things into consideration in your decision. If you plan to visit more than one office, be sure to take notes for later consideration.

ASK QUESTIONS

After you have decided that the office environment is a good fit, interview the pediatrician. Pharmacists Darcy and Phil King said, "After collecting recommendations, I scoured their websites, set up appointments and interviewed them. After the visits, it was very clear which was a good fit."

Start by asking how sick appointments work. How long would it take for a sick child to be seen? Is there a good chance the child will be seen by their own doctor? Do you have similar views on health and wellness such as circumcision, breastfeeding and immunizations? It is also important to consider what your preferences are. Do you want a doctor who offers choices and lets you decide which one works best for you? Or would you be more comfortable with one who is more directive?

Overall, does the doctor seem genuinely interested in your child or seem distracted or rushed? Take your overall impression into account when making your decision.

BEDSIDE MANNER

How the doctor interacts with your child will have a lot of impact on your decision. Do you feel comfortable around the doctor? Does your child? Are they willing to take the time to listen to your questions and concerns? A good bedside manner can go a long way in making you and your child feel comfortable.

Finding the right pediatrician can be overwhelming, but realize your decision does not have to be permanent.

"It's important to recognize you are not stuck with your decision. You see your pediatrician a lot in those first months, and if there is something really bothering you, it's okay to switch." says Becky Baldridge, an Olathe, KS, mom.

The parent's goal is the same as the pediatrician's: a happy and healthy child. When you find a doctor that is a good fit for your family, you can all work together to reach this goal. TK

SARAH LYONS IS A MOTHER OF SIX CHILDREN, INCLUDING 2-YEAR-OLD TRIPLETS. WITH A FULL HOUSE, THEY VISIT THE PEDIATRICIAN VERY OFTEN.

WHEN IS IT TIME TO FIND A NEW PEDIATRICIAN?

- If your child cries the whole time, that alone is not cause to switch.
 However, if the doctor doesn't seem to care or make an effort to soothe your child, you may have a problem.
- If you're unclear why a certain medication is prescribed or why a test is done.
- If you can't come to an agreement, or at least a middle ground, on most issues.
- If the location and hours no longer work for your family.
- If the doctor often seems inaccessible when your child is sick.
- If the doctor is making you feel bad or consistently reproaching you for parenting choices.
- If you feel the doctor is not listening to your concerns.

Before switching, discuss your concerns with the doctor. If a compromise cannot be made, it's time to look elsewhere. Your child's health is top priority.



Whether it is your child's first time at the dentist or you are just in the market for a new dental home for the little ones in your family, Little Tooth Co. has you covered. We provide comprehensive pediatric dentistry designed to set your child up for a lifetime of healthy smiles.

Schedule your child's next appointment today!

Little Tooth Co. 3920 E 91st St, Tulsa, OK 74137 918-496-2481 LittleToothCoJenks.com **\$99** Tongue-Tie OR Lip-Tie Consultation





NOW BOOKING
FOR FALL
MAKENZIE HOWARD PHOTOGRAPHY







Atul Vaidya, MD David White, MD

> 68th & Yale | 93rd & Mingo 918-492-3636 | www.eoent.com

Infant Nevelopment

YOUR GROWING BABY: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

MOVING & FXPIORATION

0-3 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- · develops head and neck control
- · tracks objects with eyes
- · turns to source of sound

How you can help:

- provide support as neck muscles develop
- offer rattles and hang mobiles
- · play daily with baby

3-6 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- supports own weight on forearms while on tummy; rolls over
- · swipes at objects; reaches out; grasps

How you can help:

- watch as baby plays on tummy to strengthen shoulder and neck muscles
- encourage reaching out for toys

6-9 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- · sits without support
- moves around on belly; gets onto hands and knees
- picks up/manipulates objects; puts things in mouth

How you can help:

- · play with baby in sitting position
- · offer toys with texture, sound and movement
- stack and knock over toys as a game

9-12 **MONTHS**

Most important tasks for your baby:

- · crawls
- pulls up to a standing position;
 "cruises" around the furniture
- develops pincer grasp, more precise use of hands

How you can help:

- baby-proof the house for baby's safety
- clear surfaces of small or breakable objects; cover pointed corners
- hand baby toys to explore and manipulate



INTERACTION & FEEDING

0-3 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- smile responses, first nonspecific and then social
- communicates needs by crying

How you can help:

- cuddle/hold baby; infants cannot be spoiled by attention
- respond to cries; meet baby's needs

3-6 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- spontaneous social smiles
- cries to get parents' attention when in need
- responsive to words and sounds

How you can help:

- show delight in baby while cuddling, feeding and changing
- let baby touch your face and look into your eyes
- talk and sing to your baby; play music

6-9 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- interested in people and many objects; more playful
- will touch mirror when seeing own image
- may begin to show fear toward strangers

How you can help:

- smile and laugh together; enjoy baby's wonder at the world
- talk to baby while pointing to image in the mirror
- take baby places with you to increase comfort with others

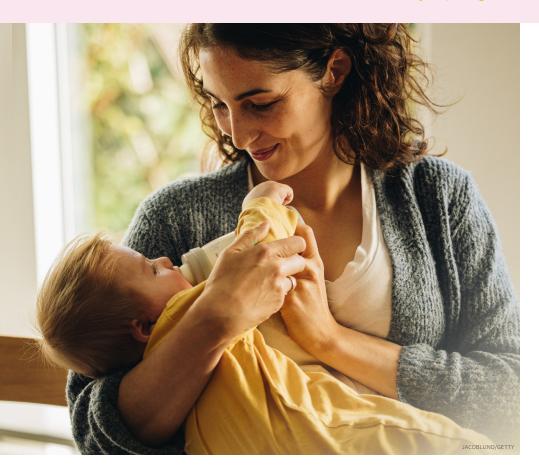
9-12 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- enjoys social interaction with others
- may show normal anxiety toward strangers, or when separated from caregivers

How you can help:

- play and have fun together
- try not to be away for extended periods
- · let baby cuddle a blankie for security



TALKING & COMMUNICATING

0-3 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- · communicates needs through crying
- hears, sees, feels, coos, burps and gurgles
- associates parents' voices with comfort

How you can help:

- respond promptly to baby's cries
- imitate baby's sounds and say them back
- talk and sing to your baby

3-6 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- experiments with new sounds, such as coos, gurgles and "baba"
- chews, sucks and bites on rattles

How you can help:

- imitate baby's sounds; take turns making sounds
- offer rattles with variety of textures

6-9 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- · responds to own name
- makes more sounds and imitates gestures
- · listens more selectively

How you can help:

- call baby by name
- "talk" with baby by repeating sounds
- sing nursery rhymes; sing along with children's music

9-12 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- copies sound combinations
- recognizes and begins to point at common objects
- repeats animal sounds; says "dada" and "mama"

How you can help:

- play gesture games such as "pat-a-cake" and "so big!"
- point to and label simple objects at home and in books
- identify animals, mommy and daddy

THINKING & LEARNING

0-3 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- inborn motor and sensory reflexes (sucking, grasping, seeing, hearing)
- moving to regularity in eating, sleeping, urinating and bowel movements

How you can help:

- stimulate baby's senses with varied textures, objects and soft sounds
- adapt to your baby's patterns of eating, sleeping and wakefulness

3-6 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- mouths and touches everything
- more interest in things beyond self
- looks at place from which a moving object has disappeared

How you can help:

- introduce soft, colorful toys with different textures and feels
- give baby a rattle, show how to shake it
- play peek-a-boo; drop a noisy toy and let baby look for it

6-9 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- transfers toys from hand to hand
- pulls, bangs and shakes, plays actively
- explores and investigates

How you can help:

- · play on the floor with toys
- · let baby imitate what you do with toys
- · praise baby for accomplishments

9-12 MONTHS

Most important tasks for your baby:

- begins to show intentional behavior; manipulates objects for different effects
- · looks for toys he sees being covered

How you can help:

- demonstrate use of toys and encourage imitation
- play pointing/hiding games with toys TK

Nutrition

STARTING SOLIDS AND AVOIDING ALLERGIES

AN INTERVIEW WITH MALINA MALKANI, MS, RDN, CDN, OWNER OF MALINA MALKANI NUTRITION AND AUTHOR OF SAFE AND SIMPLE FOOD ALLERGY PREVENTION



A: In essence, a baby-led approach to starting solids allows the baby to set the pace and lead the process of learning to eat complementary foods. Babies can get the best of both worlds, self-feeding soft finger foods from the family table and enjoying purees and mashes served on a preloaded spoon and/or spoonfed responsively (i.e., watching for and responding to the baby's cues for hunger and fullness).

Using a combination of finger foods and purees allows the baby to self-regulate while providing plenty of exposure to diverse foods, flavors and textures. It also makes it easier to switch between caregivers who use different feeding models, such as daycare and home.

Q: When should parents start feeding their baby solids?

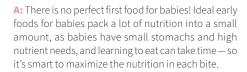
A: The Dietary Guidelines for Americans and most major health organizations agree that starting solids at around 6 months is the sweet spot, once a baby is showing the developmental signs of readiness for food. The signs of readiness include the ability to sit upright with minimal support, good head and neck control, being able to grasp larger objects and bring them to the mouth and showing interest in food.

Sometimes babies are developmentally ready a little earlier than 6 months, and that's fine and even potentially more advantageous from a food allergy prevention perspective, as long as solids aren't started before 4 months.

Q: Are there adverse effects or health reasons that parents should not start feeding solids too early?

A: There are risks associated with starting solids too early (meaning before 4 months of age), which include an increased risk of type 1 diabetes, celiac disease and food allergies. There are also risks associated with starting solids too late, meaning after 7 months, and these include an increased risk of food allergies and other feeding-related issues.

Q: What are the best solids to start with, and how/when should new ones be introduced? And is it OK to start with "regular" table food?



Nutrient-rich early food options include ripe avocado, banana, steamed green beans or broccoli, and sticks of roasted sweet potato—these are all "regular" table foods that can be easily modified for babies. Strips of well-cooked steak that babies can suck (but not necessarily ingest yet), soft meatballs and mashed lentils are additional early food options that provide iron and zinc, which are key nutrients for growth, and for brain and immune system development at this stage.

Once caregivers have offered a few early foods and gotten the process of eating underway, it's time to start offering allergenic foods like peanut and egg in baby-safe forms. Offering top allergenic foods early and consistently during infancy helps prevent the development of food allergies, but the window of time when food allergy prevention is most effective is short, so it's important not to miss it or delay introduction.

In terms of cadence, single food introductions of non-top allergenic foods and waiting a certain number of days before introducing another new food is now considered outdated advice. It ends up causing unnecessary strain on caregivers and makes it difficult to achieve diet diversity, which seems to be protective against food allergies. A better goal is to try and introduce at least one new food per day.

Conversely, single food introductions of top allergens and pausing for a few days before introducing another is a conservative, commonsense approach to allergen introduction that, in the event of a reaction, makes it easier to figure out which food is responsible, but there's no evidence that it's necessary or better; it's simply a helpful option that can reduce stress and confusion around food introduction.

Q: Can you address toxins in baby food? For example, arsenic in rice and heavy metals in other baby foods. Is it dangerous? How can



parents eliminate or mitigate the toxins babies may get from food?

A: The issue of heavy metals in baby food isn't a problem that is unique to baby food. Heavy metals are present in our food supply, existing in tiny amounts in both soil and water.

In baby food, heavy metals are particularly concerning, however, because babies have small bodies and high nutrient needs, which makes them more susceptible during a period of rapid growth and neurological development.

To help reduce a child's exposure to toxic metals in the food supply, the most important step parents can take is to offer a variety of foods. Different foods offer different nutrients — and different levels and types of contaminants. Offering a variety helps ensure that babies and children are getting the range of nutrients they need to thrive and grow, while helping to ensure that they aren't taking in too much of any one specific contaminant. It's also helpful to stay on top of your child's iron status, because people who are deficient in iron tend to absorb two to three times as much lead

Q: What else should parents know about starting solids?

A: Starting solids and introducing allergens can and should feel simple, safe and joyful! But stress and confusion can creep into the process as a result of feeding myths and misinformation, fear and pressure from extended family, and well-intentioned healthcare providers who may not necessarily be up to date on the latest infant feeding guidelines.

As a pediatric dietitian and single mother of three, my goal in writing Safe & Simple Food Allergy Prevention: A Baby-Led Feeding Guide to Starting Solids and Introducing Top Allergens was to combine my years of practical and professional feeding experience with the latest research on infant feeding and food allergy prevention into a single, stress-free resource for parents that makes feeding and allergen introduction feel easy and delicious for the whole family. This guide will help parents breeze through the process confidently, with practical tips and plenty of recipes to help little eaters learn to enjoy food! TK



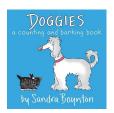






A BEGINNER'S ROADMAP TO BABY BOOKS (INCLUDING FREE BOOKS)

Sharing the world with babies is the best. Start with these books and help from the Tulsa (ity-County Library! BY JOY CARR, MLIS, YOUTH LIBRARIAN, SCHUSTERMAN-BENSON LIBRARY













Ould you believe me if I told you that I read several *hundred* picture books every year, reviewing and evaluating them for content, style, rhyme and pizzazz?

It's true! As a Youth Librarian for the Tulsa City-County Library, I'm doing all of that reading because I lead a weekly Build A Reader storytime for babies, toddlers and their big people, and I want to choose the very best books for our youngest customers and their caregivers.

When it comes to reading, babies are the absolute best audience. You are literally sharing the world with them, and it's all new, it's all exciting!

Here's a list of my absolute favorite books for babies, all of which — of course! — you can find on the shelves of the 24 Tulsa City-County Library locations (and the bookmobile!):

SANDRA BOYNTON

Boynton's books have been entertaining families for decades and are sure to build your confidence if you're feeling unsure as you begin reading to your baby. Her books are genuinely funny and encourage silly sounds and voices. Her book *Doggies* is comprised mainly of different dog barks, so if you can make silly noises, you're all set! Your child will have a favorite in no time, and you'll be asked to read it again and again.

WHO'S YOUR RAMONA?

Not sure what babies enjoy? Well, babies enjoy the same things you did when you were little! Look no further than the book or character that still gives you warm fuzzy feelings (I'm looking at you, Ramona Quimby). Perhaps it's *Goodnight Moon, If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, or *Frog and Toad*. The library continues to purchase classic children's titles that never go out of style for you to take home and share with your little one. As you read them to your baby, your enthusiasm will not only foster a love of reading but will also strengthen the bond between you and your child!

HELLO WORLD! SERIES BY JILL MCDONALD

Children's nonfiction has come a long way, and these days there's even nonfiction for babies. Nonfiction helps little ones learn about their world, and building background knowledge is a key component of building readers.

The Hello World! series of nonfiction board books by Jill McDonald contains more than 30 titles covering weather, space, dinosaurs, animals, habitats and more, all with exciting, vivid illustrations to keep little eyes interested. Each book cleverly layers simple text, in large bold print for babies, with more advanced text in smaller print for toddlers and preschoolers. The format provides a new level of learning as babies progress to the smaller, higher-level text. If your little one has older siblings, you can share the same book with them, meeting both baby and toddler where they are using different texts from the same book. Magic!

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC'S LITTLE KID'S FIRST BOARD BOOK SERIES

National Geographic's *Little Kid's First Board Book* series is another nonfiction gem. Rather than illustrations, these books feature gorgeous, clear photographs of the high quality you'd expect from National Geographic. The text is large and sparse and, with the photographs, provides the perfect amount of information and stimuli to help babies learn more about their world.

EMMA DODD PICTURE BOOKS

Emma Dodd's books just beg to be shared during bedtime snuggles. Books like What Matters Most, How Big is Love? and I Believe in Me all have tender messages to affirm your children so they know from their youngest years that they are loved and valued and perfect just as they are. The artwork is always sweetly beautiful, often featuring an animal parent and child—a lovely way to end the day before saying goodnight.

MORE BOOKS TO LOVE

I could easily make this list a mile long. Instead, here are a few authors whose books you'll often see in my weekly Baby & Toddler Storytimes: Lucy Cousins, Patty Rodriguez, Leslie Patricelli, Petr Horáček, Anna McQuinn, Liesbet Slegers, Kevin Henkes, Carole Boston Weatherford, Il Sung Na, Denise Fleming, and Guido Van Genechten. You can also find a fuller list at tccl.bibliocommons.com

FREE BOOKS FOR KIDS AGES O THROUGH 5!

Finally, I can't neglect to mention that Tulsa County children ages 0 through 5 can receive a FREE book every month until their fifth birthday through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library (tulsalibrary.org/imagination-library). Books are mailed directly to your child and will be age-appropriate, so as your little one grows, so will their library collection (and their knowledge and love of reading, we hope)! Find the Dolly Parton Imagination Library tab on the Tulsa Library website or return a paper form to any Tulsa City-County Library location.

In the meantime, never hesitate to ask a librarian if you have questions or would like assistance finding something specific for you and your baby. We love to help and are excited about parents and caregivers interested in beginning that reading journey.

The best thing to remember is that, if you're reading to your baby, you're doing it right! **TK**

USE THIS LIST TO EXPLORE MORE BOOKS IN OUR CATALOG: TCCL.BIBLIOCOMMONS.COM/LIST/SHARE/1612276466_TULSA_SCHUSTERMAN_BENSON/2586344021_BOOKS_FOR_BABIES_THAT_CANT_MISS





ccording to Names.org, using data from the Social Security Administration, gender-neutral baby names are surging. A record 17% of American babies were given gender-neutral names in 2023, up more than double from 50 years ago.

There are different theories for why gender-neutral names are surging. While gender fluidity is on the mind of some parents, most likely they think the names are just cool, unique and different.

Names.org released its predictions for the Most Popular Gender-Neutral Baby Names in 2024 after analyzing Social Security Administration data on actual births over time and trends from users on its website.

To be eligible for the list, the name must be given less than 95% of the time to one gender. The company's annual predictions have been 95% accurate since 2018.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Dylan Predicted No. 1 for the First Time: 7,837 Dylans are projected in 2024, Dylan ranked No. 2 last year.
- Avery ranks No. 2, Logan falls from No. 1 last year to No. 3, Carter moves up to No. 4 and Riley drops to No. 5.
- Gender-Neutral Names are Most
 Popular in the South: Over the last
 10 years, nine of the top 10 states are in
 the South. Louisiana ranks No. 1 in the
 nation with 17.5% of babies given gender
 neutral names over the last 10 years. TK

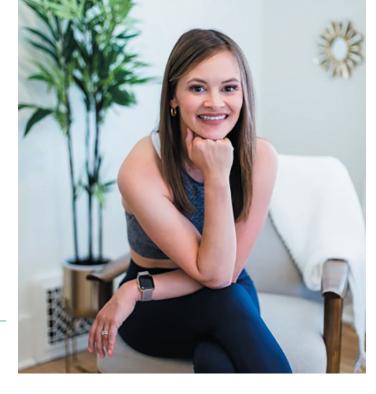
10 MOST POPULAR GENDER-NEUTRAL BABY NAMES IN 2024:

- **1. Dylan:** 7,837 babies are predicted for 2024 (Ranked No. 2 last year)
- **2. Avery:** 7,258 (No. 3)
- 3. Logan: 7,251 (No. 1)
- **4. Carter:** 6,401 (No. 4)
- **5. Riley:** 6,383 (No. 5)
- **6. Parker:** 6,313 (No. 6)
- 7. Rowan: 6,081 (No. 7)
- **8. Cameron:** 6,051 (No. 8)
- 9. Angel: 5,654 (No. 9)
- **10. Kai:** 5,431 (No. 10)

PREGNANCY AND POST-PREGNANCY DON'T HAVE TO BE PAINFUL:

PROTECT YOUR PELVIC FLOOR

BY BETTY CASEY



DR. WHITNEY ELLSWORTH, A PHYSICAL THERAPIST AND OWNER OF BALANCED PELVIC & PHYSICAL THERAPY IN TULSA PHOTO CREDIT: TAYLOR ROMAINE

ccording to the National Institutes of Health, nearly 24 percent of U.S. women are affected with one or more pelvic floor disorders, and many of those will undergo surgery. Pelvic floor disorders include pelvic organ prolapse, urinary incontinence or urinary frequency and urgency and anal incontinence (accidental bowel leakage). Dr. Whitney Ellsworth, a physical therapist and owner of Balanced Pelvic & Physical Therapy in Tulsa, wants to raise awareness of pelvic floor disorders and to let women know that help is available.

Ellsworth holds a doctorate degree from Washington University in St. Louis and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Oklahoma State University. A physical therapist for 17 years, Ellsworth has spent 10 of those years specializing in pelvic floor dysfunction.

A mom of four, Ellsworth's interest in pelvic health began after the birth of her second child. "I had a lot of pelvic floor dysfunction," she says. "I went back to exercising after the doctor said I was good to go at six weeks. I quickly realized I wasn't doing OK."

PREGNANCY & EXERCISE

The bootcamp exercise that Ellsworth loved caused pelvic organ prolapse because she went back to it too soon. "I felt like it could have all been prevented with more knowledge about a safe return to exercise," she says. Because she felt that women like her need more information and more preventative care as well as postpartum care, Ellsworth completed certification courses to specialize in pelvic care, found a mentor and eventually opened a practice, much of it focusing on postpartum care.

"I get to see a lot of women during pregnancy," Ellsworth says. "They may come to me for back pain, and I may transition them to postpartum care."

She says awareness of pelvic health has grown over the last 10 years, thanks largely to social media, but she believes that postpartum care is still lacking in the United States.

"I get a lot of women self-referring," Ellsworth says. "For example, I have a woman who is a weightlifter who wants to stay safe during pregnancy, and she wants to return to lifting."

Ellsworth says she would like to see women, especially those who want to return to exercise, get a postpartum wellness exam between six and 12 weeks because six weeks is too early to know if their bodies are ready. If they are not ready, women may just give up on exercise altogether.

"For me, it was like a spiral event," Ellsworth says. "I couldn't exercise, so I had more postpartum anxiety because I couldn't exercise."

PREGNANCY, PAIN & PEE

She also wants women to pay attention to pain. During pregnancy, women may experience pubic pain, which can be debilitating as the pregnancy progresses, even to the point of being unable to walk. Lower back pain is another common complaint, which she says is typically due to an imbalance in the hips or core, which leads to a tight pelvic floor.

After giving birth, women may experience pain, incontinence, pelvic prolapse or pain during intercourse.

"I don't want women to think of pregnancy pain as 'normal'," Ellsworth says. "I think it's your body's way of telling you that something is off. A lot of women think it's normal to pee when you sneeze after you've had a baby. It's a sign that something's wrong,"

CORRECTING PROBLEMS

Because the pelvic floor is impacted by the hips and the deep core (the area beneath the upper abdominal muscles), Ellsworth does a muscular skeletal evaluation on her patients. "It's important to know what's going on with the hips and the deep core, which is key because it gets very stretched out during pregnancy. You have to make an effort to keep it strong."

To correct imbalances, core and hip issues that affect the pelvic floor, Ellsworth has created her own program to align the pelvis, and to strengthen the glutes and deep core.

Ellsworth believes that women often suffer unnecessarily. She helped a young woman who had been having pain during intercourse for the first five years of her marriage. Ellsworth says she had her feeling better in two weeks.

"She thought the pain was normal, but it can be fixed," Ellsworth says.

DON'T WAIT

"If you have pain, even mild pain, get it checked out," Ellsworth advises. "Call your doctor. If you're feeling good, be sure to maintain strength of mobility and flexibility during pregnancy. My mission is that I want people to have more awareness and knowledge of what's normal and what's not."

To that end, Ellsworth is working on an online program for women using the techniques she has developed. ${\sf TK}$





ENROLLING FOR FALL!

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







- South Tulsa Dance Co. SouthTulsaDanceCo
- 918-369-5299

Located at 101st and Yale in Shoppes of Seville @SouthTulsaDanceCo Keally@SouthTulsaDanceCo.com SouthTulsaDanceCo.com

Training tomorrow's leaders today!

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



Call to enroll your child today!

918-258-0594

1025 W. Kenosha Broken Arrow, OK 74012

RhemaChildCare.com



Pregnancy

COMMON CONCERNS OF PREGNANCY AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM

BY BETTY CASEY



REGINA KIZER, APRN-CNM, DNP, A BOARD-CERTIFIED MIDWIFE WITH BREATHE BIRTH AND WELLNESS IN TULSA.

Most pregnant women know the joy of pregnancy, but they may also feel the aches and pains, sleepless nights and discomfort that can accompany it. While most of these concerns are minor, there are still things you can do to alleviate them.

"Just because discomforts in pregnancy are common doesn't mean you just have to be miserable the entire pregnancy," says Regina Kizer, APRN-CNM, DNP, a board-certified midwife with Breathe Birth and Wellness in Tulsa. "Midwives have been assisting women to have more comfortable pregnancies since the Paleolithic era (40,000 B.C), and throughout this time have partnered with women, guiding them toward a comfortable and empowering pregnancy experience!"

Kizer wants women to know that they can take an active role in their health, and she has a passion for supporting them through pregnancy and beyond. We asked Kizer about some common complaints that women have during pregnancy, and what they can do about them.

MORNING SICKNESS

"There are many theories on what causes morning sickness," Kizer says. "For those with mild nausea and vomiting, a deficiency of vitamin B6 has been thought to contribute to morning sickness, along with the influx of pregnancy hormones. In such cases, supplementing with B6 a few times a day can lessen nausea and vomiting."

Another theory explored in a recent study by the University of Cambridge is that morning sickness is

caused by high levels of the hormone GDF15, which is produced in the placenta and acts on the maternal brain, causing nausea and vomiting. "If a mother has a lower level of GDF15 in her system prior to pregnancy, her nausea and vomiting will be more severe," Kizer explains. "It is promising that this information will lead to the introduction of new treatments in the future to help moms that suffer from extreme nausea and vomiting in pregnancy."

Other tips to improve mild morning sickness include frequent snacking on simple carbs, like saltines and fresh fruit. Or munching on a few almonds or cashews can also help.

"While curling up in the fetal position may feel like the right thing to do when nausea hits, taking a brisk walk in the fresh air gets the heart rate pumping and circulates the heavy hormones that are making you feel nauseated," Kizer says. "For some, wearing sea bands or getting acupuncture can offer relief. Sucking on sour candies or products containing ginger are also helpful."

NEED TO PEE

"The need to pee more often in pregnancy is both hormonal and physical," Kizer says. "HCG, one of the fetal hormones, leads to frequent voiding. This hormone plateaus at the end of the first trimester, then the growing uterus starts to compete with the bladder for limited space in the lower abdomen and pelvis."

It may seem that drinking less fluids would help, but Kizer says this is not true. "While some think it wise to limit fluids, this can lead to an irritated bladder and promote urinary tract infections, so don't skimp on water and aim to get half of your body weight in ounces of water and non-caffeinated beverages every day!"

FATIGUE

"Growing an entire human is exhausting work!" Kizer says. "The hormone progesterone, the key hormone supporting the pregnancy, leaves mothers feeling drained as it slows down the gastro-intestinal (GI) tract and widens the blood vessels. Many moms find it difficult to eat due to the full feeling caused by a slowed GI system. Wider blood vessels can cause a lower blood pressure, which can cause momma to feel very tired, and sometimes lightheaded."

To battle the hormone fatigue, Kizer encourages women to take a brisk morning walk in the fresh air. "A walk will increase the heart rate and circulate the hormones," she says.

"This will also stimulate the GI tract and lead to an improved appetite and energy!"

Some other fatigue busters might include:

- Frequent small, healthy meals and getting plenty of water
- Nap if you need to. You will benefit from this once baby arrives as well!
- Exercise, moderate activity 30 minutes daily most days of the week



SORE BREASTS

"As you can now guess, most of the common discomforts in pregnancy are connected to the increasing hormones of pregnancy," Kizer says. "Breast soreness is often one of the first signs of pregnancy for some."

Kizer recommends the following tips to help alleviate soreness:

- Wear a supportive bra. Avoid a tight fit to allow rib expansion, which will help with lung expansion later in pregnancy.
- Consider sleeping in a sports bra for overnight support.
- · Lose the underwire to improve comfort.
- Avoid stimulation, as it leads to increased discomfort.
- Cold therapy with cool compress can be soothing for sore breasts by reducing blood flow to the tender area.
- Warm showers with a gentle sprayer and avoiding harsh soaps can be helpful.

SLEEP DISRUPTION

"Sleep disruption is multifactorial, and, again, tied to hormonal changes in pregnancy," Kizer says. There are many changes occurring as the uterus expands, so comfortable positions are difficult to discover. Hip pain, reflux, busy mind and frequent bathroom trips are common complaints.

"My own rationale on sleep disruption," Kizer says, "is that the body is preparing you for the task of caring for a newborn that will need nourishment every 1-3 hours upon arrival. This requires lack-of-sleep stamina. It would be very difficult to nourish your baby every few hours with joy without some training. The good news is that this season is short in the grand scheme of parenthood. My tip for pregnant moms and new parents is nap when you need to or when baby is sleeping! Household chores will still be there once you are rested."

Kizer says, if you are struggling to unwind or having insomnia or leg cramps, Kizer suggests trying Magnesium powder. It can relieve many pregnancy discomforts and promote better rest.

LIGAMENT PAIN

"The expanding uterus is anchored to round ligaments," Kizer explains. "As it rises out of the deep pelvis at around 12–14 weeks, it stretches the ligaments like a stretched rubber band. This can actually cause micro-tears in the ligaments and make them feel sore or spasm."

To alleviate the resulting pain, Kizer recommends gentle stretching. Cat cows and forward inversions can promote those ligaments to reset and may offer improved comfort.

In general, Kizer encourages women to practice self-care, including practicing good nutrition of frequent, small meals, napping when needed and getting adequate sleep, stretching and doing moderate activities 30 minutes of the day, most days of the week. These are all ways to have a more enjoyable pregnancy. "Partnering with a provider you are comfortable discussing your concerns and discomforts with is essential to achieving your pregnancy goals," she adds. TK

RESOURCE LIST

BREASTFEEDING

La Leche League of Oklahoma

Breastfeeding support and information. **lllok.org**

Coalition of Oklahoma Breastfeeding Advocates

Mission is to promote, protect and support breastfeeding in Oklahoma.

405.297.5683, ex.105; 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**

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 nursemidwives 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

For 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.

800.550.4900; 918.481.4884; 6600 S. Yale, Suite 1307, Tulsa; tulsa@birthright.org; birthright.org/tulsa

Bradley Method of Husband-Coached Childbirth

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

818.788.6662; bradleybirth.com

Lamaze International

Provides parents with education pertaining to pregnancy, birth practices and parenthood. lamaze.org

DONA International

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, residential program for pregnant women, adoption services and assistance applying for Medicaid (SoonerCare).

2450 N. Harvard Ave. Tulsa; 918.949.4673; **cceok.org**

Community Action Project (CAP) of Tulsa

Early Childhood Education and other related family services with the mission "to help young children in lower-income families grow up and achieve economic success." **captulsa.org**



Community Service Council of Greater Tulsa

Operates Tulsa 2-1-1 Helpline and online site www.211tulsa.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 and referral service, 918.834.2273; Babyline, 918.894.1475 to link low0income women with low-cost prenatal care; Planline, 918.295.1222 for help in finding affordable birth control and other fail planning services. 918.585.5551; ccrc@csctulsa.org; csctulsa.org/ccrc

Tulsa Educare

A state-of-the-art early childhood center 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



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

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 regarding learning and teaching young children. **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;

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; for information on services and appointments, call 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, 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. 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. English and Spanish. For children who may have delays, Sprouts advocates for early intervention and helps families find local resources. 918.699.4250; sproutsdevelopment.com

Tulsa City-County Health Department: Child Health and Guidance

Promotes and supports healthy family relationships and child development. Provides prevention, education, screenings, diagnostics and treatment to children and families. Children First offers home-based services by registered nurses to help first-time mothers prepare for parenthood at no cost. Many of the services and classes are for a minimal fee. 918.582.9355; tulsa-health.org/personal-and-family-health/child-guidance

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. 918.582.9355; tulsa-health.org/WIC

RESOURCE LIST

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; thegriefcenter.org

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. Support groups, bereavement library and a 24-hour grief line. 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, tips for prevention at home, daycare. Safe medicine disposal. Poison helpline 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**

Auto Safety Hotline

Information on infant car seats and recalls: 888.327.4236; **nhtsa.gov/recalls**

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

Safe Kids Tulsa Area

Led by The Children's Hospital at Saint Francis, Safe Kids Tulsa Area helps families prevent child injuries with a wide range of safety information. Provides car seat checkup events, call 918.494.SAFE (7233);

safekids.org/coalition/safe-kids-tulsa-area

Consumer Product Safety Commission

Information on safety standards and product recalls for cribs, toys and other children's accessories. Safety education section with 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 between 6 and 12 months old, regardless of income or insurance coverage. **infantsee.org**

Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association (JPMA)

Information about product quality, safe usage, and product recalls as well as 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.

Oklahoma Mothers' Milk Bank

Provides donor breast milk to meet the needs of infants, specifically those who are preterm or ill. 405.297.5683; **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. 888.454.3383; savebabies.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-andimmunizations/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**

Autism Resources

Autism support and information: autismoklahoma.org; peakbh.org; okautism.org; autismfoundationok.org

CHADD

Seeks to improve the lives of children and adults with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); online support communities for parents and caregivers. 1.866.200.8098; **chadd.org**

Down Syndrome Association of Tulsa (DSAT)

Provides families and communities by with educational events and connections while increasing awareness and an attitude of inclusion within the community. 918.804.3728; **dsat.org**



Tuition-free, Christian education and therapeutic services for children age birth to 6 with special needs and their families. Resources, tools and hands-on training to help parents and guardians become confident caregivers; 5120 E. 36 St.; 918.664.6746; littlelighthouse.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 on pregnancy, breastfeeding, birth defects, nutrition and more. 888.663.4637; marchofdimes.org

The Arc of Oklahoma

Provides information about intellectual and developmental disabilities, legal rights, available programs and services for individuals with disabilities. 2516 E. 71st St., Suite A; 918.582.8272; **thearcok.org**

Total Source for Hearingloss 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. National photo listing. 888.200.4005 (English); 877.236.7831 (Spanish); adoptuskids.org

Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS)

Find foster care and adoption information and resources, including post-adoption resources. 918.794.7575; **okdhs.org**



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;

cceok.org/adoption

Gladney Center for Adoption

Support, guidance and resources for those considering adoption. 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 wishing to adopt 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

Breastfeeding Basics, Dads Basic Training, Cesarean Birth Class, Maternity Orientation Class, Grandparenting Class. For more information and a complete, current list of classes, visit healthcare.ascension.org

Oklahoma State University Medical Center

Recently 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

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

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

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**.

Saint Francis Health System

6161 South Yale Ave.; 918.494.2200

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

The Children's Hospital at Saint Francis, 6161 S. Yale Ave.; 918.502.6000

Classes include a childbirth series, a weekend childbirth class, childbirth education, grandparenting resources, maternity area tours and breastfeeding basics. For more information about all classes, community events or for printed materials, visit **saintfrancis.com** or call 918.494.2200.



MILLER SWIM SCHOOL

Why are swim lessons important for babies under one year old?

Many parents wonder if starting swim lessons for babies under one year old is necessary. The short answer is yes! Here's why early swim lessons are beneficial for your little one:

- Building Essential Skills: Although infants won't be swimming laps, early swim lessons focus on fundamental water skills, which are crucial for later swim development.
- Bonding Time: Swim lessons provide a unique opportunity for parents and babies to bond in a fun, relaxed environment.
- Lays the Groundwork for Safety: Early exposure to water, under the guidance of trained instructors, introduces babies to basic water safety concepts.
- Social Interaction: Even at a young age, babies benefit from the social aspects
 of group swim classes.
- Routine and Consistency: Establishing a routine with swim lessons helps
 create a sense of consistency and security for your baby. It also sets the stage for
 lifelong water safety habits.

Starting swim lessons early builds a strong foundation for water safety and is an investment into their future that goes beyond the pool!

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



Bright minds. Bright ideas. Bright futures.

Welcome to University School, a pioneer in gifted education since 1982. Our mission is to challenge gifted students with a dynamic curriculum in a nurturing academic environment.

- Small class sizes
- Experienced faculty
- Personalized learning
- Comprehensive program
- Interdisciplinary approach





USCHOOL.UTULSA.EDUPreK3-8th grade gifted children



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 2024

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





September is Save the Tiger Month! Visit **Tulsa Zoo** to learn more.

PHOTO COURTESY TULSA ZOO



BROUGHT TO YOU BY





September 1 Sunday

LEMON-AID 2024

All ages, Aug. 31-Sept. 2, various locations, thelemonaidproject.org

Kids all over Tulsa once again come together to raise money for those in need while learning how to be an entrepreneur and philanthropist. Stands will be located throughout Tulsa, and at Expo Square, Philbrook and Southwood Landscape & Garden.

BIG DAM PARTY



All ages, Aug. 30-Sept. 2, 2650 S. John Williams Way, facebook.com/riverparks

Big Dam Party will debut Zink Lake, its Whitewater Flume, the Williams Crossing Pedestrian Bridge, boat launch opportunities, Gathering Place's expanded riverfront, the Big Dam Run and the return of Tulsa's Great Raft Race on Sept. 2.

September 2 Monday

LAST CHANCE: BUGS AT TULSA ZOO

All ages, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Tulsa Zoo, 6421 E. 36th St. N., tulsazoo.org/bugs

Sept. 2 is the final day to see Tulsa Zoo's BUGS exhibit, filled with 19 giant animatronic BUGS! Included with zoo admission

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 3 Tuesday

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: PRESCHOOL 🔁 W

For preschoolers, 10:30-11 a.m., Schusterman-Benson Library, 3333 E. 32nd Pl., tulsalibrary.org

The best in children's literature. songs, games, finger plays, rhymes and other reading-related activities are shared with your preschooler.

OKAQ SENSORY NIGHT

All ages, 6-8 p.m., Oklahoma Aquarium, 300 Aquarium Dr., Jenks, okaquarium.org

Pick up a self-guided scavenger hunt and choose a sensory toy from the treasure chest!

BLUEY'S BIG PLAY

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

Join the Heelers in their first live theatre show made just for you, featuring brilliantly created puppets. Repeats Sept. 4.

September 4 Wednesday

STORY TIME AT TULSA ZOO 🖤

All ages, 10-10:30 a.m., Tulsa Zoo, 6421 E. 36th St. N., tulsazoo.org

Listen to a story and meet an animal ambassador every Wednesday morning at the world globe by the zoo entrance. (Will move indoors in case of inclement weather.) On Sept. 4, Philbrook will lead arts and crafts following story time.

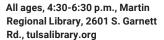
DOWNTOWN TULSA FARMERS MARKET () (1)



All ages, 5-8 p.m., Chapman Green, 605 S. Main St., downtowntulsa.com

Shop for healthy foods and enjoy local entertainment.

TRAVEL THE WORLD WITH YOUR LIBRARY! (



Discover Buenos Aires' most beautiful places and enjoy some fun activities.

INSPYRAL CIRCUS JAM (



All ages, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Guthrie Green, 111 E. Reconciliation Way, guthriegreen.com

Inspyral Circus Jam is a free. community jam open to anyone interested in circus arts. Juggle, hula hoop, spin poi, dragon staff, diabolo, balance things and more!

September 5 Thursday

ADVENTURE TOTS W



Ages 2-4, 10-11 a.m., Central Park, 1500 S. Main St., Broken Arrow, secure.rec1.com/OK/brokenarrow-ok/catalog

Toddlers will explore and develop skills through sensory activities that stimulate all five senses. Repeats Sept. 19 and 26; \$10 for all free classes. Sign up online.



IN THE MIDDLE: TWEEN BOOK CLUB

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

Visit the legendary Loch Ness in Melissa Savage's Nessie Quest and discuss Scottish history, geography and lore while enjoying Scottish snacks.

OWASSO GATHERING ON MAIN (2)

All ages, 6-9 p.m., Redbud Festival Park, 109 N. Main St., Owasso, owassogathering.com

Enjoy a family-friendly block party in Owasso's Redbud District!

September 6 Friday

SYMPHONY IN THE PARK (F)

All ages, 6-9 p.m., Guthrie Green, 111 E. Reconciliation Way, guthriegreen.com

Tulsa Symphony kicks off its 2024–2025 season with a free community performance.

September 7 Saturday

TINKERFEST

All ages, 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Discovery Lab, 3123 S. Riverside Dr., discoverylab.org

Dive into a full day of hands-on tinkering and exploration.

GRAND OPENING: SAMUEL WASHINGTON WOODHOUSE NATURE CENTER (2)

All ages, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Chandler Park, 6500 W. 21st St., facebook. com/chandlerparktulsa

Celebrate the opening of Chandler Park's new nature center with an open house and "Legends and Loot" hike.

MONARCH MIGRATION (

All ages, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Ray Harral Nature Center, 7101 S. 3rd St., Broken Arrow, facebook.com/ rayharralnaturecenter

Learn about monarch migration by using Ray Harral's nature trails as a life-size board game!

September 8 Sunday

SENSORY-FRIENDLY FAMILY HOURS

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

These early hours are designed for families with children on the spectrum and other sensory needs. Lights are dimmed and exhibit sounds are turned down.

MONARCH EXPERIENCE

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

Strap on your butterfly wings or antenna for a weekend of fun and learning about the monarch butterflies that will be migrating through Oklahoma soon. See website for more information. Repeats Sept. 7.

WAITRESS

2 p.m., Tulsa PAC, 110 E. 2nd St., tulsapac.com

Jenna, a diner worker with dreams as delicious as her pies, serves up a slice of life filled with love, friendship, and the pursuit of dreams! Presented by Theatre Tulsa. Additional showtimes, Sept. 7–21.

September 9 Monday

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: FAMILY/ STAY AND PLAY (2)

Ages 0-5, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Bixby Library, 20 E. Breckenridge Ave., Bixby, tulsalibrary.org

After storytime, join for games, toys and activities that foster critical early literacy skills. Repeats weekly on Mondays, Sept. 9–30.

POP ART POKÉMON PORTRAITS **(5)**

For teens and tweens, 5-6 p.m., Owasso Library, 103 W. Broadway St., Owasso, tulsalibrary.org

Create a fun and colorful pop art Pokémon portrait of your favorite character. Must pre-register at tulsalibrary.org/events or by calling 918.549.7323.

September 10 Tuesday

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: BILINGUAL/ STAY AND PLAY (3) (7)



Cheer for Tulsa Drillers!

Tulsa Drillers' 2024 season is coming to a close. But you can still cheer for them at ONEOK Field at the following home games:

9/3: 7 p.m. vs. San Antonio 9/4: 12 p.m. vs. San Antonio 9/5: 7 p.m. vs. San Antonio 9/6: 7 p.m. vs. San Antonio* 9/7: 7 p.m. vs. San Antonio 9/8: 6 p.m. vs. San Antonio* (Fan Appreciation Night — Meet Bluey!)

*Fireworks Nights Tickets and additional details are available at tulsadrillers.com

10:30-11:30 a.m., Maxwell Park Library, 1313 N. Canton Ave., tulsalibrary.org

Enjoy stories, songs and activities in English and Spanish.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH: "THE BEAT IS THE HISTORY" WORKSHOP

For teens and adults, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Martin Regional Library, 2601 N. Garnett Rd., tulsalibrary.org

Join the Hispanic Resource Center for an immersive journey through sound that brings rich, polyrhythmic beats of the Americas to life.

September 11 Wednesday

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: FAMILY/ STAY AND PLAY 🕞 🖤

Ages 0-5, 10:30-11:30 a.m., Rudisill Regional Library, 1520 N. Hartford Ave., tulsalibrary.org

After storytime, join for games, toys and activities that foster critical early literacy skills.

For teens and tweens, 4-5 p.m., Owasso Library, 103 W. Broadway St., Owasso, tulsalibrary.org

Have fun, earn community service hours and help make the library a better place for teens.

September 12 Thursday

BUG HOTELS: BUGS ARE BEAUTIFUL!

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

Make bug hotels and a tasty dirt cake, and read books about bugs and why they're beautiful.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH: HISPANIC RESOURCE CENTER 25TH ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION **(5)**

All ages, 4-5 p.m., Martin Regional Library, 2601 S. Garnett Rd., tulsalibrary.org

Share your memories and enjoy creative activities as Tulsa City-County Library honors the Hispanic Resource Center's journey over the past 25 years.

September 13 Friday

CREATIONS IN STUDIO K

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

This season's Creations in Studio K program will feature three renowned female choreographers. Additional showtimes through Sept. 22.

BABY, IF YOU'VE **EVER WONDERED: AN EVENING WITH TV LEGEND, TIM REID**

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

Journey through the life and career of producer, director and actor Tim Reid in this special one-man show. Repeats Sept. 14.

September 14 Saturday

HOBBIT DAY PARTY (

All ages, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Central Library, 400 Civic Center, tulsalibrary.org

Enjoy snacks, crafts, Maker Space activities and more. Costumes are encouraged.

RAVEL AND TCHAIKOVSKY

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

Join the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra, guest conductor David Lockington and featured pianist Sean Chen for the opening of Tulsa Symphony Orchestra's spectacular 19th season.

September 15 Sunday

FAMILY SWIM W



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

Enjoy warm water, exercise and family fun time.

September 16 Monday

MUSIC MONDAY (

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

Join for a fun morning of singing and dancing to help foster early literacy skills.

WORKPLACE WINNERS: STRATEGIES FOR JOB SEEKERS **()**

For adults and teens, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Central Library, 400 Civic Center, tulsalibrary.org

Join a team of experts as they help you navigate tips and tools to aid you in getting your ideal job! Must pre-register at tulsalibrary.org/ events or call 918.549.7323.

September 17 Tuesday

ROSE DISTRICT FARMERS MARKET 📵 🖤

All ages, 4-8 p.m., Broken Arrow Rose District, brokenarrowok.gov

Shop this weekly evening market and enjoy the Rose District's local businesses.

September 18 Wednesday

CHARCOAL SKETCHING FOR AMATEURS (3)

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

Experiment with the messy, forgiving medium of charcoal.

September 19 Thursday

STORYTIME AT THE AIRPORT G

Ages 0-5, 10-10:30 a.m., Tulsa International Airport, 7777 Airport Dr., tulsalibrary.org

Join the Maxwell Park Library at the airport for this fun destination storytime.

PIZZA IN A MUG (



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

Bring a mug and join to make easy mug pizzas. There will also be beverages and crafts, and mugs to borrow if needed

MOVIE IN THE PARK: SELENA (

All ages, 7-9:30 p.m., Guthrie Green, 111 E. Reconciliation Way, guthriegreen.com

Enjoy themed activities before a screening of the biographical drama Selena (rated PG).

September 20 Friday

FLINT FAMILY FOUNDATION CONCERT SERIES: FEATURING THE TULSA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (

All ages, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St., tulsalibrary.org

The Tulsa Symphony Orchestra Brass Quintet will teach attendees about their instruments while performing vour favorite movie tunes.

September 21 Saturday

PIONEER DAY (

All ages, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Bixby Historical Society, 15 E. Needles, Bixby, tulsalibrary.org

Join the Bixby Library and Bixby Historical Society for an educational day of free arts and crafts demonstrations from Bixby's past, including leather working, trick roping, butter churning and much more!

PAW PATROL LIVE! **HEROES UNITE!**

All ages, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., Tulsa PAC, 110 E. 2nd St., pawpatrollive.com

Calling all good citizens! The PAW Patrol is yelping for help as they face their greatest challenge yet in this live performance. Repeats Sept. 22,

MONARCHS ON THE MOUNTAIN (3)

All ages, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Chandler Park, 6500 W. 21st St., tulsaurbanwildernesscoalition.org

Learn about monarch conservation efforts, purchase local milkweed plants and enjoy fun and educational activities.

ANTHEM PLAYGROUND GRAND OPENING (

All ages, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Anthem Church, 7777 S. Garnett Rd., Broken Arrow, weareanthem. church/playground

Celebrate the grand opening of Anthem Church's new playground with face painting, inflatables, food trucks, a performance by Hot Toast Music Co. and more!

WOOFSTOCK **G**

All ages, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Jenks Riverwalk, 300 Riverwalk Terrace, Jenks, animalallianceok.org

This super-groovy pet adoption event features rescues from across Oklahoma, pet-related vendors, a Kid Zone and more.

September 22 Sunday

FORMOSA QUARTET

3 p.m., Tulsa PAC, 110 E. 2nd St., tulsapac.com

Formosa Quartet's unique programs reflect their explorations of Asian and Western traditions, jazz and pop songs, and the rich musical heritages of the Americas.









September 23 Monday

OPEN BOOK CLUB: A WEEKLY TEEN HANGOUT 6

For teens and tweens, 4-5:30 p.m., Herman and Kate Kaiser Library, 5202 S. Hudson Ave., tulsalibrary.org

Gush about the book you're reading. Or do you want to complain about vour English assignment? You're welcome to do that, too! No judgment. Mr. Paul will serve tea and cookies. Repeats Sept. 9, 16 and 30.

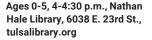
September 24 Tuesday

NATURE BUDDIES

Ages 0-3, 10:30-11:30 a.m., Tulsa Zoo, 6421 E. 36th St. N., tulsazoo.org

This fun and interactive sensory experience will allow parents and their children to bond during hands on nature-based activities and close-up encounters with zoo ambassador animals. Must pre-register.

BUILD A READER STORYTIME: FAMILY () (1)



There's something for everyone simple songs and books for the little ones, more interactive stories and activities for older children

PAWS FOR READING (



Ages 6-11, 4-5 p.m., Broken Arrow Library, 300 W. Broadway Ave., Broken Arrow, tulsalibrary.org

Kids ages 6-11 are invited to read their favorite books to a furry, fourpawed friend. Must pre-register at tulsalibrary.org/events or call 918.548.7323.

September 25 Wednesday

TEEN LOUNGE () W



For teens and tweens, 4-6 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.

TEEN CONNECTION ()



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

This is a social group for middle and high school students with highfunctioning autism.

September 26 Thursday

HISPANIC HERITAGE **MONTH: CRAFT** CASTLE - MINI LOOM (

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

Make a mini loom perfect for designing and creating your own tiny sarape (a Mexican blanket).

SCIENCE AFTER SCHOOL (3)

For elementary schoolers, 4-5 p.m., Brookside Library, 1207 E. 45th Pl., tulsalibrary.org

Join for hands-on science projects and literature connections.

September 27 Friday

WILL ROGERS MOVIE NIGHT: SHAUN THE SHEEP MOVIE (

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

See a fun family movie at the Will Rogers Memorial Museum. Doors open at 6, and the movie begins at 7. Free popcorn provided.

FOWLER AUTOMOTIVE FILMS ON THE LAWN: **CAT VIDEO FEST**

All ages, 7:45 p.m., Philbrook Museum, 2727 S. Rockford Rd., philbrook.org

Enjoy an a-meow-zing night out in the gardens full of interactive activities that focus on all things felinel

September 28 Saturday

ROCK & READ

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

Sing outdoor karaoke, build on silent auction items, and enjoy delicious food and drinks at this fundraiser for Gaining Ground Literacy.

THREE IS A PARTY

7:30 p.m., TCC VanTrease PACE, 10300 E. 81st St., signaturesymphony.org

Signature Symphony's season kicks off with a program of quirky and energetic pieces.

September 29 Sunday

DIG: DAY IN THE GARDEN

All ages, 2-5 p.m., Tulsa Botanic Garden, 3900 Tulsa Botanic Dr., tulsabotanic.org

Celebrate fall among pumpkins. scarecrows and a hay maze at this annual fundraiser benefiting the Garden. Activities include bubblemaking, face painting, music and a make-and-take spooky dish garden. Free Josh's SnoCones and Barbee Cookies, plus other food and drinks. Tickets include all food and activities and are \$30 for Garden member adults, \$40 for non-member adults. Children are free with adult ticket

September 30 Monday

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.

TEEN TIME: SUPER

For teens and tweens, 4-5 p.m., Charles Page Library, 551 E. 4th St., tulsalibrary.org

Play Super Smash Bros. on the library's Switch.



Find more at tulsakids.com/festivals

SCOTFEST

Sept. 13, 5-11 p.m.; Sept. 14, 9 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sept. 15, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.

Central Park, 1500 S. Main St., Broken Arrow

Celebrate Scottish and Irish culture with live music, Highland games, food and more. **okscotfest.com**

918 DAY FESTIVAL

Sept. 18, 5-9 p.m.

Chapman Green, 605 S. Main St.

The 918 Day Festival will honor the cultural arts of Tulsa's many vibrant ethnic and racial communities through performances, demonstrations, art displays, etc. **downtowntulsa.com**

AUTUMN IN THE BOTANIC GARDEN

Sept. 19-Oct. 31, Tuesday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Tulsa Botanic Garden, 3900 Tulsa Botanic Dr.

Tulsa Botanic Garden is ushering in fall with pumpkins and their annual scarecrow display along with plenty of activities to get outside during the season. Shop and take pics in the pumpkin patch, explore the hay maze and vote for your favorite community scarecrow. Bands & Blooms are every Thursday in September and October with live music from 6–8 p.m. Learn more at tulsabotanic.org

TULSA GREEK FESTIVAL

Sept. 19-21, see website for schedule

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 1222 S. Guthrie Ave.

Eat authentic Greek food — like gyros, Loukoumades and lamb dinners — while enjoying traditional dancing and live folk music. tulsagreekfestival.com

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH: NOCHE FESTIVAL

Sept. 20, 7-9 p.m.

Kendall-Whittier Library, 21 S. Lewis Ave.

Celebrate Hispanic-Heritage Month with a nighttime street party featuring a mariachi band, piñatas, food and more! tulsalibrary.org



FESTIVAL AMERICAS

Sept. 21, 2-8 p.m.

Guthrie Green, 111 E. Reconciliation Way

This free, family-friendly event celebrates the rich culture of Latin America through an afternoon of live music, local art and live mural painting, kids' activities, local merchants and more. festivalamericas.org

TULSA STATE FAIR

Sept. 26-Oct. 6

Expo Square, 4145 E. 21st St.

Get ready for 11 days of awesome at the Tulsa State Fair, featuring midway rides, your favorite fried foods, livestock shows and so much more! tulsastatefair.com

BROKEN ARROW ROSE FESTIVAL/CHALK IT UP FESTIVAL

Sept. 27, 5-8:30 p.m.; Sept. 28, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.

Broken Arrow Rose District

View the annual chalk art contest and rose show while enjoying kids' activities, performances by Inspyral Circus and more. **keepbabeautiful.org**

HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL

Every Friday and Saturday, Sept. 27-Oct. 26, gates open at 5:30 p.m.

Castle of Muskogee, 3400 W. Fern Mountain Rd., Muskogee

Young and old can enjoy the haunts and thrills at Castle of Muskogee's Halloween Festival. **okcastle.com**

ROSE KITES OVER BROKEN ARROW

Sept. 29, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Nienhuis Park, 3201 N. 9th St., Broken Arrow

Decorate free kites and watch Tulsa Wind Riders Kite Club fly their kites — and even demonstrate kite fighting! They will have historic kites and kites from around the world. **keepbabeautiful.org**





Tulsa Actress Aila Grey Makes Big Screen Debut in *Twisters*

By Betty Casey



he storm disaster film, *Twisters*, hit theaters in July, swirling action and romance together to create a summer blockbuster. Scientist and storm chaser Kate Cooper (Daisy Edgar-Jones) crosses paths with social media storm chaser Tyler Owens (Glen Powell) in tornado-plagued central Oklahoma. The film, directed by Lee Isaac Chung, provides high velocity action, romance and intense special effects thanks to wind-producing FX fans, a rain machine and plastic glass that mimics shattered windows. Semitrucks tumble, people and animals are sucked into the air and debris swirls around towns-people trying to escape the mega storms. Caught in a motel in the middle of intersecting tornadoes, a small girl (Aila Grey) makes a run for it through an empty swimming pool into some pipes to escape the storms.

As the child in the film, Aila Grey, age 7, endured late-night shoots, cold weather, shattered glass and a pause in production due to the writer's strike. Aila and her mom, actress Hannah Reese, came to the TulsaKids office to talk about Aila's experience in *Twisters*.

Q: What did you do to audition for the role of the small child in *Twisters*?

Aila: I sat in a swing set at my house. I was holding a popsicle, I was licking it, and I pretended I saw a guy.

Q: What do you do in the film?

Aila: I run. I go out of a motel and run toward an empty pool and go down a ladder to exposed piping with my movie mom, Samantha Ireland.

Q: It looks like you're running through high winds. How did they do that?

Aila: There are these giant fans all around the pool. They're huge. And they used smoke machines.

Q: What was your favorite part about being involved in the movie?

Aila: It was seeing a stunt guy going up into a tornado on a string. I kind of wished I could do that. I also like the other actors. Most of them, especially Glen and Daisy and Jeff (Swearingen), were my friends. Jeff was the one who went up in the tornado. Geoff Haley (Fast and Furious) let me operate the techno crane — it was fun!

I would also say that the best part was staying in a nice hotel (in Oklahoma City). And the food was good on set. They had very sweet watermelon and good burritos. We had lunch at night (because of late-night shoots).

Q: How many days did you film?

Aila: About nine days. When I left the set, they had a dummy. It was kind of scary. It's not even as tall as me. It had hair like me.

Q: What was the hardest part about filming the movie?

Aila: All the emotions you have to do. To do the emotions, I think of something scary and put on a face.

Hannah, Aila's mom, says that the first part of shooting was in July, but it had to stop during the strike. By the time shooting resumed, it was winter. Aila had lost four front teeth, and her clothing and shoe sizes had grown. Aila also had to tough out the cold Oklahoma winter. Each time the director called "cut," they came running with a coat for her.

Q: What did you think when you saw the whole film?

Aila: I thought it was really scary at the end with the tornado around the fire. I don't really understand why everyone is so excited. I've never been in a big movie before. I don't like seeing myself (on screen), but I was happy with my work.

Q: What advice do you have for kids who want to become actors?

Aila: Get an agent. (Aila is represented by Magna Talent in Oklahoma City.)

Q: What are some of your favorite things to do in Tulsa?

Aila: I like to go to Philbrook, Gathering Place and Discovery Lab. My favorite restaurant is Sushi Hana. I get teriyaki chicken. Every time I've been there, we sit by the fish. And I like chopsticks.

Q: What else do you like to do besides acting?

Aila: I like singing. And I auditioned for a new movie. I had to be scared and scream! TK

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

