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**AWESOME AUSTIN:
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FILM review

By Jack Kyser
In the Heights

Read online at: www.austinfamily.com/films



This month's cover features 2-year-old Eloise. She loves to play Elsa when watching Frozen! Cover photo by Wild Rumpus Photography.



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Catch Austin Family magazine live on "Good Day Austin" every Thursday morning.



EDITOR'S NOTE

ANNETTE LUCKSINGER

Lucksinger is a mom of two and author of the guidebook and app Exploring Austin with Kids.

Austin has always seemed such a summer city to me. Maybe it's the fact that we have so many swimming holes and natural springs. Maybe it's the lake constantly filled with stand-up paddleboarders and kayakers, or the hordes that throng the parks for live music, in spite of the heat.

In this spirit, July's issue celebrates "Awesome Austin!" Our feature covers Austin from A to Z, sharing fun ways to stay busy all summer long (and beyond). This issue also announces Austin Family magazine's 2021 Readers' Poll Winners! A huge part of what makes

Austin such an amazing place is its support of local businesses and creatives.

Growing up in a small town north of here, I remember the excitement of driving to the "big city" to stock up on supplies at the big chain stores. After I moved to Austin as an adult, I realized that those kinds of items can be found in any big city, but what makes Austin truly unique is how it embraces all that can't be found in a big box store.

Local businesses preserve so much – a strong sense of community, friendship, originality, creativity, local economic stability, neighborhood support, a nurturing of curiosity and a celebration of a place's uniqueness.

So, congratulations to the 2021 Readers' Poll Winners. Offer them your support.

Enjoy every moment of summer, Austin!

austinfamily®

July 2021 Vol. 30, No. 4

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We are dedicated to serving the Greater Austin area by providing up-to-date parenting information and ideas that promote smart parenting and healthy homes. We promote our clients' businesses by increasing their customer bases and enhancing their public images.

Austin Family is published monthly by KKKemper, Inc.

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 7559, Round Rock, Texas 78683-7559

Phone Number: 512-733-0038

On the web at: www.austinfamily.com

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Austin

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Play it product recalls SAFE

Government Recalls Gliders, Strollers and Swing Sets



Fisher-Price is recalling about 175,000 **Rock 'n Glide Soothers and Soothe 'n Play Gliders**. Babies placed on their backs unrestrained in the products have been found on their stomachs, which can lead to suffocation. Four infant deaths have been reported. The items were sold at juvenile product

stores and mass merchandisers nationwide, including Walmart and Target stores and online at amazon.com. The 4-in-1 Rock 'n Glide Soothers were sold from January 2014 through December 2020, for about \$108. The 2-in-1 Soothe 'n Play Gliders were sold from November 2018 through May 2021, for about \$125. Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled products and visit Fisher-Price online at service.mattel.com for a refund.



Ergobaby has issued a recall for about 2,800 compact city **strollers** because the button on some buckles that releases the harness can break and detach

when pressed while the child is in the stroller. This makes it difficult to release and poses a choking hazard to young children. The recall involves the Ergobaby METROUS1, METROUS2 and METROUS4 Compact City Strollers. These were sold online at ergobaby.com, albeebaby.com and amazon.com from July 2018 through September 2019 for about \$300. No injuries have been reported, but consumers should immediately stop using the recalled strollers and contact Ergobaby for instructions and a full free replacement restraint harness with buckle.



Leisure Time Products has issued a recall of about 9,000 Backyard Discovery Big Brutus, Little Brutus and Mini Brutus metal A-frame **swing sets**. The attachment that connects the swing hanger to the top tube can fail, posing an injury hazard. The products were sold

online at amazon.com, backyarddiscovery.com, homedepot.com, lowes.com, wayfair.com and other online retailers from May 2019 through January 2021 for between \$400 to \$570, depending on the model. While no injuries have been reported, consumers should immediately stop using the recalled swing sets and contact Leisure Time Products for a free repair kit. Leisure Time Products is contacting all purchasers directly.

The US Consumer Products Safety Commission works to protect the public from unreasonable risks of serious injury or death from more than 15,000 types of consumer products.

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AROUND

Austin

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Story Wranglers

Paramount Education's Summer Writing Roundup has returned, running now through August 16. This free initiative was created to encourage creativity, keep students connected to the arts and prevent summer learning loss.

Elementary and middle school students write stories based on the theme announced every Monday at austintheatre.org/roundup. Writers submit their stories on Thursdays, and the award-winning Paramount Story Wranglers ensemble transforms one lucky story into a music video, digital animation or short film. Each performance premieres the following week with the announcement of the next theme.

The Story Wranglers Summer Writing Roundup is based on Paramount Education's award-winning Literacy to Life program, a seven-week in-school residency in which third graders learn the foundations of creative writing through arts-integrated lessons designed to motivate students and improve their writing skills, confidence, creativity and storytelling.

During the residency, each classroom writes hundreds of stories as a class, in small groups and in individual journals. At the end of the series, professional actors known as the Paramount Story Wranglers transform students' original stories from page to stage in a live performance for the entire campus.



Paramount Education is rounding up young writers.

Free Meals

This summer, families can pick up free meals for children and caregivers at various Austin ISD schools. The program provides funding to AISD, which in turn allows the district to expand food access to even more families. Meals are free for any child younger than 19 as well as older students enrolled in special education or high school graduation programs.



Austin ISD's meal distribution for families continues into the summer.

Families will have the option of picking up daily to-go meals at designated summer program sites or weekly meal packs at curbside locations. Children do not have to be enrolled in AISD to receive meals.

Parents or caregivers may receive meals without children present by providing documentation (such as a birth certificate, student ID card, report card or attendance record) at the service site. AISD also provides free caregiver meals for adults with accompanying children or with the documentation listed above. These are available at weekly curbside meal sites only and are prepared by local restaurants, providing a boost to this industry in this critical time as well.

To find AISD summer meal sites in your area, text FOOD or COMIDA to 512-229-9110. View all sites and service at bit.ly/3pB2w14.

by the numbers



150 million hot dogs are consumed by Americans on the Fourth of July

Source: hot-dog.org



45% of summer vacations in the U.S. are to the beach or ocean

Source: factretriever.com



1905 year the popsicle was accidentally invented by an 11-year-old whose soda froze outside

source: funfactoday.com

Cookbook Fundraiser

Austin local Ally Smith created a cookbook to help raise funds for food needs for foster families in the Central Texas Area. Social worker, children's advocate and culinary creator, she developed the paperback recipe collection, *Seasoned To Smile*. All proceeds from its sale go towards purchasing groceries and delivering them to the doorsteps of Austin foster families. *Seasoned To Smile* also provides funding for classes in basic nutrition and cooking for local foster children living at Helping Hand Home for Children in the Hyde Park area.

Right now, there are more than 100 children in Central Texas in need of foster placements. Smith hopes that *Seasoned To Smile* will spark conversation and movement in the community of Austin to give back to families who are stepping up for children in need. The cookbook is available at Hillside Pharmacy or seasonedtosome.com.



Smith's mission is to create support for foster families. The sale of her cookbook provides funds for groceries and promotes healthy eating. Photo courtesy Ally Smith.

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Awesome Austin: A to Z Ideas for Summertime Fun

BY ANNETTE LUCKSINGER

Austin, as we all know and love, has an energy and spirit different from anywhere else in the world. Here are some one-of-a-kind ways to get out and celebrate awesome Austin – from A to Z – in the summer days ahead!

Arcades

Bring your Pac-Man and Skee-ball skills for some old school fun at the arcade. Head to the game rooms at entertainment complexes and laser tag venues, or visit Pinballz for a truly nostalgic '80's experience.



Bats

How many cities can boast of 1.5 million bats under their bridges? Watch these fascinating mammals emerge from the Congress Avenue Bridge as they wake up and feed. Spot them from the sidewalk along the bridge, from viewing areas on the trail below, or from a kayak tour! Call the bat hotline at 512-327-9721 for expected emergence times.



Caves & Caverns

Cool off in the heat of the summer by heading underground! Take a scenic guided tour to peer into the grotto at Westcave Preserve. You can also hit the road for a day trip to Innerspace Caverns in Georgetown, Longhorn Caverns in Burnet, or Natural Bridge Caverns in San Antonio.



Day Trips

If you're itching for new scenery, plenty of day trips are in easy reach. Hit up the hill country lakes, take a dip in cold spring water at Krause Springs in Spicewood or the Blue Hole in Wimberley, tube the San Marcos River that runs through town or the Comal River at Schlitterbahn, experiment and tinker at the Science Mill, take in Texas history at the Alamo, visit exotic animals in Johnson City or farm animals at the Sauer-Beckmann Living History Farm in Stonewall ... the options are endless!

Escape Rooms

If you're looking to escape the heat, try puzzling your way out of one of these rooms. Can you complete a highly classified mission in time to save the country, find hidden gold before the mob arrives or survive a blizzard before your cabin collapses? These venues provide the perfect outing for kids who love teamwork and a good challenge.

Frozen Yogurt

Cool down with a frozen treat, loaded with healthy toppings (and maybe some sprinkles or gummy bears, for added color).

Go Karts

Buckle up and let the kids take the wheel for a change! They can race friends at Austin Park N Pizza, COTA Karting at the Circuit of the Americas or the indoor track at K1 Speed Austin.

Horseback Riding

On the outskirts of the city you'll find several stables that specialize in teaching Western or English horseback riding, as well as caring for a horse. Some barns also provide summer camp opportunities, special "Mom and Me" weekends, educational programs and equine-assisted therapy.

Ice Skating

Put on your coats and ice skates for Public Skate hours at Chaparral Ice's two locations. Or, sign up for summer camps where they teach figure skating and ice hockey, among other activities.

Juice Bars

A healthy treat to beat the heat, chill with a smoothie or a specialty squeeze at your local juice bar or ice cream shop.



Kayaking

Rental places for kayaks, stand up paddle boards, canoes, rowing boats and pedal boats dot the shores up and down Lady Bird Lake. Pick one for a lake adventure!

Lazy Rivers

You've likely heard of the lazy river at San Antonio's Marriott and Hyatt hotels. But did you know you can float much closer to home? Kick back on a tube at Pflugerville's Typhoon Texas Waterpark, Round Rock's Rock'N River Water Park or the new Kalahari Resort.



Music

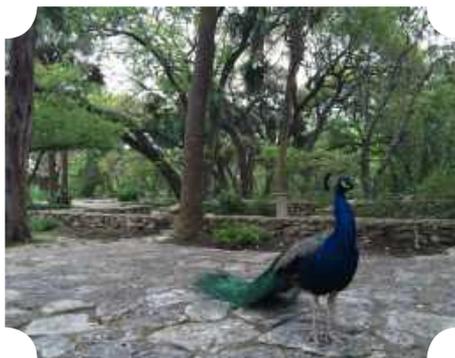
It is Austin after all... You'll find family-friendly shows at outdoor restaurants, coffeeshops, brewpubs, parks, grocery stores (see the lineup at Central Market North), theaters (the Long Center and Zach Scott are hosting summer concert series), farmers markets – oh, and live music venues too!

Nature

Get out into the great outdoors. Hit the hiking trails, play at parks, camp out under the stars at a nearby state park, go fishing, have a picnic, bike or just take it easy and relax in a hammock.

Outdoor Museums

Visit a museum ... outside! Wander shaded pathways at Laguna Gloria or the Umlauf Sculpture Museum to see exhibits worked into the landscape. Ask for a scavenger hunt map upon check-in. Take in history at Pioneer Farms. For the military-minded, visit Camp Mabry's Armor Row where tanks line the lane outside the Texas Military Museum.



Peacocks

Keep your eyes peeled for peacocks at Mayfield Park and Preserve. Short, wooded trails, ponds and gardens make it a good place to wander or picnic.

Quiet

The libraries have opened their doors again. Cool off at a storytime, movie night or one of the many librarian-hosted events. Join a summer reading program. Then stock up on books, movies and music to wile away the long days of summer.

Rock Climbing

This sport can take many shapes and forms. Join a rock-climbing camp or team and climb the cliffs along the Barton Creek Greenbelt and Milton Reimer's Ranch. Hit the road to hike up Enchanted Rock for a fun day trip. Or head to a bouldering gym where high energy kids can literally climb the walls.



Swimming

Jump in! There is no shortage of swimming pools, splash pads, springs and swimming holes in the area.

Trains

Take a train ride aboard the Rawhide Rocket miniature train at the Austin Zoo or the Cedar Rock Train in the SW Williamson County Regional Park. For a bigger adventure, book a trip to the hill country with the Austin Steam Train Association.

Ultimate Frisbee

Cheer on Austin's own professional ultimate frisbee team, the Austin Sol. If catching a game sparks your kid's interest in the sport, check out Sol Academy's youth clinics and camps.

Vacation in Your Hometown

Austin is changing so much, it's easy to feel like a tourist at home. Take advantage of it! Visit someplace new or fancy. Book a night at a hotel. Have fun on a Duck Boat, Bat Boat tour, Black Austin tour or Capitol tour. Rent an electric bike and cruise town. You'll likely learn something new while on "vacation" and gain a whole new perspective of the city you call home.



Wildflowers

Wildflowers bloom year-round at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower

Center, but there's so much more to do after you've stopped to smell the flowers. Check the event calendar for storytimes and family yoga. Hit the hiking trails. Play in the creek in the Children's Garden. Swing in tree swings at the Texas Arboretum. Then cool off with activities in the Little House or with a cool drink at the Wildflower Café.



BMX

The Ninth Street BMX trail is community-built by local riders and welcomes a range of skill levels. Beginners can roll and bob along a series of small dirt mounds while advanced riders catch air on higher, built-up ramps.

Older kids might want to check out the nearby Skate Park on 12th Street or the Pflugerville BMX Park too.



Yoga

Get strong and stretched with family or child yoga classes at a local studio, or follow ATX Yoga Girl for family-friendly classes held at parks and museums around town.

Zoo

Visit the zoo! Austinites have a soft spot for rescue animals, and the Austin Zoo is no exception. With a goal of education and conservation, this zoo offers animal encounters throughout the day. You can meander the trails to visit primates, reptiles, amphibians, native Texas wildlife and lions, tigers and bears! Oh my.

Annette Lucksinger is a mother of two who writes and plays in Austin.

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FAMILY MATTERS

BETTY RICHARDSON

Richardson, PhD, RN, CS, LPC, LMFT, is an Austin-based psychotherapist.

Raising Respectful Kids

Q We have young children ages 3 and 5. My wife and I want to raise them to be respectful. We've observed disrespectful kids running in restaurants, kicking the seats in front of them on airplanes and even calling their parents names. It seems kids are less considerate today than in past generations. What suggestions can you offer for raising respectful children?

A You say it seems kids are more disrespectful today than in the past. While I see some families raising polite children, I also see disrespectful behaviors coming from not only children but adults as well. Some pediatricians report seeing more rude behavior between family members. Some folks writing about disrespect also point to our children getting praised for minor efforts as part of the problem. Children see they can get by with many things, including disrespectful behavior.

In an essay, "Advanced in Years," Frank Bures describes the work of David Lancy, an anthropologist and author of *Raising Children: Surprising Insights From Other Cultures*. Lancy explains that as a nation we focus on our children and consider them our most valued members of society. This is unlike much of the world where elders are the most valued members. Children in an elder-

focused society learn to earn their way into importance by helping their elders and community. In our society, it seems that most children aren't taught this level of respect.

Regardless of the reasons we have perhaps become more disrespectful as a society, you asked for advice on how to raise respectful children. Here are some suggestions:

1. When a child demands that something be given to him, rephrase it in a calm voice. If a child says, "I want a cookie now," a parent can suggest, "Could I please have a cookie?"
2. Model what you want to see from your child. Use "please" and "thank you" with your child. Speak respectfully of others and avoid talking negatively about anyone in person or on social media.
3. Look for the reason behind a child's disrespectful words such as "I hate you" or "you are a bad mom or dad." Most often he is expressing anger about something else. Help a child learn to recognize his anger so he can say, "I'm angry" rather than name calling or saying something hurtful that he really doesn't mean.
4. Teach children empathy for others. Talk about what it would be like to be

in another person's shoes, especially someone who is being bullied, called names, chosen last for teams or excluded from groups.

5. Set family rules that enhance respect. One rule might be to put the cell phones and other social devices away at meal time.
6. Take away privileges when you tell a child to stop a behavior and she won't stop.
7. Teach children to treat others like they want to be treated.
8. Take your children places where they will interact with people who are respectful and can be respectful in return.
9. Listen to your children and respect their choices. This teaches them to do the same when interacting with others.
10. Encourage them to engage in conversations using the mantra, "If it's not kind, don't say it."

You are to be commended for wanting to raise kids who are respectful. If more and more parents do this, we will see more respectful behavior in this country as a whole.



LIFELINES

BRENDA SCHOOLFIELD

Schoolfield is a freelance medical writer based in Austin.

When Dogs Are More Than a Child's Best Friend

A dog can be more than just a child's best friend. Therapy dogs and their handlers can help bring comfort and reduce anxiety in times of stress.

What Is a Therapy Dog?

Therapy dogs are not the same as assistance dogs or emotional support dogs. Each performs specific functions according to Assistance Dogs International.

An assistance dog is covered under the American Disability Act (ADA). These dogs can go into public places where other types of dogs aren't allowed.

Assistance dogs are specially trained to perform tasks that help a person with a disability. A dog trained to help a blind person stay safe while walking is an example of an assistance dog.

An emotional support dog is a companion to one person for the purpose of providing comfort or reducing anxiety. People who have mental health or emotional challenges get a prescription from their mental

health provider for an emotional support dog. This prescription allows the person's emotional support dog access to certain public places, such as airplanes.

A therapy dog typically works as a team with a handler and visits different people. Therapy dogs and their handlers are trained and certified to go into specific settings, such as hospitals and nursing homes. Research has shown that therapy dogs can help reduce pain, stress and anxiety as well as promote well-being.

Pet Therapy and Mental Health

Pet therapy can be used as a tool during counseling and play therapy sessions. Children who suffer from trauma, abuse or emotional challenges sometimes have trouble engaging with a therapist. The presence of a therapy dog can help motivate the patient to participate in the session. The therapy dog is a neutral topic for conversation, which can help foster a connection between the patient and

the therapist. Texas State University offers a certification program in animal-assisted counseling and play therapy for graduate students and mental health providers.

"Research has shown that therapy dogs can help reduce pain, stress and anxiety as well as promote well-being."

Patients at mental health facilities also benefit from therapy dogs. Therapy dogs and their handlers from Divine Canines visit Austin State Hospital and Austin State Supported Living Center. These visits give residents an opportunity to experience positive social interactions.

Pet Therapy on Campus

Pet therapy is used with college students to reduce stress and anxiety. A recent study compared the effect of dog therapy versus stress

management workshops for college students who were struggling academically. Students who had the most exposure to dog therapy showed significant improvement in skills needed for successful academic performance. Students who had shorter periods of pet therapy in addition to stress management workshops showed no improvement. Researchers think that the stress management workshops increased students' stress and anxiety levels. When interacting with the dogs, students felt calmer and more relaxed due to the social support and interaction. In fact, the pet therapy helped the students more than the knowledge presented in the stress management workshops. These findings can be used to design future pet therapy programs for at-risk students.

Pet Therapy in the Hospital

Pet therapy has been shown to reduce anxiety in hospitalized children as well. In a recent study, children who were visited by a therapy dog and handler had a significantly greater decrease in anxiety compared to the control group. Their parents reported a high level of satisfaction with the pet therapy program.

Therapy dogs can do more than just bring comfort to young patients. They can help with medical goals, such as motivating a child to get out of bed. When children are frightened about bloodwork or imaging procedures, a dog's presence can help bring calm.

Three new highly trained medical dogs are joining the team at Dell Children's Medical Center in Austin. Their handlers will be Certified Child Life Specialist employees. These dogs will work 40 hours a week and provide more support than local pet therapy dogs, who usually only visit a few times a month.

Pet Therapy Reading Programs

Many pet therapy organizations sponsor reading programs in schools and libraries, as well as remotely. Children who want to read aloud to their classmates find it easier to read to a therapy dog. Any child who wants to improve their reading skills can schedule a free one-on-one online tutoring session with the Bow Wow reading dogs and handlers at thedogalliance.org/reading-programs. Another reading program, Barking Book Buddies, is provided by Divine Canines.

Dog therapy organizations in the Austin area that are recognized by the American Kennel Club are the Dog Alliance, Divine Canines and Therapy Pet Pals of Texas. Visit their websites to find out how to volunteer or how to get your dog trained as a therapy dog if you think he might have the right temperament to help others.

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Children's Hospital
Dell Children's Hospital

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Ashley's Playhouse

Festival
Round Rock Chalk Festival

Indoor Play
Indigo Play

Kids' Barber
Cookie Cutter @ Arboretum

Kids' Consignment Store
SparkleKIDS Upscale Resale

Kids Entertainer
Silly Sparkles

Kid-Friendly Restaurant
Hat Creek Burger

Kids' Family Photographer
Jordan Ashley Photography

Kids' Store (Locally owned)
Terra Toys

Library
Round Rock Public Library

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Central Market North Lamar

Makerspace
Figment Creative Lab

Pediatric Clinic
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Peter Pan
Star Wars
Moana
Hamiltunes
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&
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AUSTIN FAMILY 2021 30 YEAR ANNIVERSARY Readers' Poll Favorite

Ages 4-18 ★ kidsActingStudio.com ★ 15 Locations plus Virtual

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Cedar Park Pediatric Clinic

Photographer
Jordan-Ashley Photography

Skating Ring
Playland Skate

Waterpark
Kalahari Indoor Waterpark

Specialty Camp
Kitchen House

Sports Camp
WAYA

Spring Break Camp
YMCA Camp Twin Lakes

STEAM
Idea Lab

Equestrian
Switch Willo Stables

Fitness
YMCA Town Lake

Foreign Language
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Fine Arts Camp
ZACH Theatre Camp

Nature Camp
Earth Native Wilderness

Overall Fun Camp
Jump! Gymnastics

Overnight Camp
Camp Champions

Robotics Camp
Snapology

PLACES TO LEARN

Acting
KidsActing

Art
Cordovan Art School

Basketball
PAC

Ceramics
Ceramic Lodge

Cheerleading
Cheer Station

Creative Writing
Badgerdog Writing

Dance
Dance Discovery

Gymnastics
Austin Gymnastics Club

Martial Arts
Master Gohring Tai Chi and Kung Fu

Math and Science
Mad Science

Music Instrument
Austin School of Music

Music Vocal
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THE LEARNING CURVE

ALISON BOGLE

Alison Bogle is a writer living in Austin with her husband and three children. A former fourth grade teacher, she now enjoys writing about children and education.

Pack your bags! Benefits of Family Travel

Just hearing the word “travel” makes me want to pack my bags and go! Well, that’s not entirely accurate. It makes me want someone else to pack my bags so that I can just go! I’ve always loved to travel, even as a little girl. I loved the new sights, experiences, tastes and the novelty of never knowing quite what to expect.

As a parent, I’ve passed my love of travel on to my three kids. Packing for my large family is more of a chore than in the glory days of packing for one, but the joy of travel together far outweighs the effort required to make it happen. We’ve taken on marathon road trips, visits overseas, local explorations and vacations ranging from super active to those where we channel our inner beached whales. Each one has left us with lasting memories and has brought us closer as a family.

Traveling with kids requires more – more planning, more packing, more money, more energy, more patience

and flexibility and, well... more. All of that can lead parents to take fewer trips or to shy away from taking a family trip at all. There are so many wonderful things that our children learn from travel that it’s worth the effort to make it happen. And, I can tell you from experience, the more you do it, the better you all become at it, making subsequent trips easier and even more enjoyable.

While travel can be expensive, causing many families to forgo taking trips together, it doesn’t always have to break the bank. With a little creativity, you and your kids can reap the benefits of traveling without a hefty hit to your wallet.

If you need to keep costs minimal, consider less expensive experiences like day trips, visiting state parks or camping. If you have zero budget for travel, consider “traveling” in your own home. Research a place that you’d like to visit. Then route the trip, make a traditional meal from that area, listen

to “local” music, make homemade crafts and decorations embodying that location, and even dress as you would if you were a resident of that city or town.

Here are just some of the ways your children can benefit from travel:

1. Sense of adventure

Learning to seek out new experiences and try new things starts young. When your child becomes comfortable putting himself out there at a young age, that zest for life is more likely to carry on into adulthood.

2. Acquire new skills

Traveling teaches kids skills they might not learn otherwise, such as how to board a plane, ride the subway, order in another language, read a map, behave in a hotel, ride a city bus, pack a bag and myriad other skills.

3. Confidence

Research shows that children gain

confidence when they feel a sense of accomplishment or self-assuredness. Travel provides the opportunity to master new skills and navigate new experiences, offering an excellent way to build confidence.

4. Flexibility and patience

We all know travel horror stories like the time that the plane sat on the tarmac for hours, the car got a flat or the museum was closed for repairs. Travel requires you to go-with-the-flow when things go wrong and to practice the patience needed for riding in the car for hours or for standing in long lines. The more your children practice being flexible and patient, the more likely they will be able to call upon those skills when they need to be flexible and patient at school, at home or with friends.

5. Appreciation for others

The best way to learn about different ways of living and being is to experience them firsthand. Travel broadens children's minds, leading to understanding, appreciation, tolerance and compassion – beautiful character traits to instill in our kids.

6. Better understanding of geography

It is one thing to read about the piney woods of East Texas when you're surrounded by live oak and cedar, but it is another thing altogether to stand at the base of a pine tree, drinking in the scent and staring up into the needles. Experiences are ripe with sensations, which help us to form longer-lasting memories. Experiencing the varied topography of our country – or other countries – helps children to truly learn and understand geography.

7. Family bonding

Let's be real here. You're going to have some tough moments when traveling as a family. Sometimes you may even wonder if you're actually

un-bonding! But, overall, traveling together helps you grow closer. Sharing novel experiences leads to lasting memories – ones that you will talk about for years after. It's unlikely you can say the same about the time you all sat around watching a TV show together. Shared experiences become the family lore that reminds us that we are all in this together.

While the idea of traveling with children might be overwhelming, remind yourself that the goal is not perfection. No matter what your trip looks like, or how it goes, you will be making family memories and teaching your children to be open to new experiences. So, what are you waiting for? Get packing!



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Splash Pads

AUSTIN

www.austintexas.gov/page/pools-splash-pads
Not all locations are open, listed are those that are.
Hours 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

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EAST

Bartholomew Splash Pad
5201 Berkman Dr.

Chestnut Splash Pad
1404 E. 16th St.

Lott Splash Pad
1180 Curve St.

Metz Splash Pad
2407 Canterbury St.

Rosewood Splash Pad
2300 Rosewood Ave.

SOUTH

Liz Carpenter Splash Pad
201 Dawson Rd.

Ricky Guerrero Splash Pad
1100 Brodie Ln.

WEST

Eastwoods Splash Pad
3001 Harris Park Blvd.

ROUND ROCK

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GEORGETOWN

Downtown Splash Pad
816 S. Main St.
Open 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., daily

San Jose Water Park
1707 San Jose St.
Open 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., daily

Rabbit Hill Park
1109 Blue Ridge Dr.
Open 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., daily

LEANDER

Lakewood Park
406 Municipal Dr.
Open 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., daily

Robin Bledsoe Park
601 S. Bagdad
Open 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., daily

Quarry Splash Pad
1901 Sun Chase Blvd.
Open 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., daily

CEDAR PARK

Brushy Creek Lake Park (2, one at Lake Park, and other Champions Park)

3300 Brushy Creek
Open 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., daily

PFLUGERVILLE

Northeast Metro Park
15500 Sun Light Near Way
Open 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.

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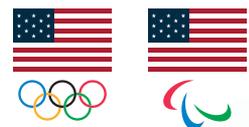
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July 2021

calendar

Thu 1

Seussical the Musical. Join us on the great lawn for a live production of Seussical the Musical through Arts in the Park performed by the Central Texas Theater Academy. 7 to 10 p.m. Central Buda Amphitheater and City Park, 204 San Antonio Rd. FREE. budaamphitheater.com/arts-in-the-park.

Fri 2

4th of July Fireworks Show. Watch a special Independence Day fireworks show! 9:30 p.m. to midnight. Tomichi Trail near Rough Hollow Elementary. lakeway-tx.gov.
CONTINUED: Seussical the Musical, see Thu 1.

Sat 3

30th Annual Patriotic Festival. 8 a.m. to 11:55 p.m. Bastrop Patriotic Festival Schedule Shuttle Bus Service (now with air conditioning) from Fisherman's Park, 1200 Willow St. FREE. business.bastropchamber.com.

Sertoma Independence Day Parade and Frontier Days 2021.

RED! WHITE! BLUE! AND YOU! The Parade and Frontier Days are back for 2021! 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. FREE. roundrocktexas.gov.

4th of July Parade. A special 4th of July parade will take place starting at Lakeway Drive from the Live Oak Golf Course and end at the Activity Center, followed by a hot dog reception. 8:30 a.m. to noon. lakeway-tx.gov.

Market in the Park. Spend your Saturday exploring this outdoor market in the park along Buda's historical downtown greenbelt. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Across the street from Summer Moon Cafe. budachambertx.com.

Farmers Market. Food, crafts and much more from a variety of local vendors every Saturday. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Downtown San Marcos on the Square. toursanmarcos.com.

Vista Brewing Presents "Live on the Lawn."

Head to Vista Brewing's pop-up beer garden at the Hill Country Galleria in Bee Cave. 4 to 6 p.m. 12700 Hill Country Blvd. FREE. vistabrewingtx.com.

Hands On History. Climb in tanks, sit in a cockpit, learn about weapons and equipment from 1812 and on, plus more. 6 to 9 p.m. Texas Military Forces Museum, 3038 W. 35th St. \$5 for 14 and over, \$1 for 13 and under. texasmilitaryforcesmuseum.org/hand-on-history.

Bastrop Patriotic Festival. Thirtieth annual event to celebrate the Fourth of July begins with 5K run. Wonderland, Kiddie Train Rides, retail vendors and various family friendly activities follow. End the day with the largest fireworks show in Central Texas. Fisherman's Park, 1200 Willow St. FREE. business.bastropchamber.com.
CONTINUED: Seussical the Musical, see Thu 1.

Submit Your Event

Visit austinfamily.com and click "Submit your event." The deadline is the 5th of the month preceding the month of the event. If your event charges more than \$15, send details to kaye2003@austinfamily.com for approval.

Sun 4

Popsicle Run 4 miler/3k/1k. Enjoy a challenging course that covers much of Plum Creek with a 4-mile, 3K and 1K race! Fruit ice for all finishers! 7 to 9 a.m. Negley Elementary, 5940 McNaughton. \$10. athleteguild.com.

July 4th Parade. Parade begins at 9:00 a.m. Murphy's Park, 1600 Veterans Dr. FREE. bit.ly/3gF4CJg.

Mermaid Day. Mermaids, mermen, mermoms, merdads and merpeople, bring your tails! Noon to 6 p.m. Lakeway Swim Center, 3103 Lakeway Blvd. \$7 and under. lakeway-tx.gov.

Heritage House Open - First Sunday. Visit the Heritage House Museum and learn about local history! 1 to 4 p.m. 901 Old Austin Hutto Rd. library.pflugervilletx.gov.

4th of July Fireworks and Music Event. Mark your calendars and come on out for a great evening of music and food with an awesome fireworks show! 4 to 10 p.m. cityofmanor.org.

HEB Austin Symphony July 4th Concert and Fireworks. Amazing event complete with a fireworks display over the city skyline backed by symphonic patriotic classics. 8 p.m. Vic Mathias Shores, formerly Auditorium Shores. FREE. my.austinsymphony.org.

Kyle's Independence Day Fireworks Show.

Join in the celebration of Independence Day this July 4th with the City of Kyle's Independence Day Celebration Fireworks Show. 9 p.m. Plum Creek Golf Course, 750 Kohler's Crossing. FREE. cityofkyle.com.

Hutto's 4th of July Celebration. Live music, vendors, food trucks, kids' activities and fireworks. 9:30 p.m. Brushy Creek

Amphitheatre, 1001 CR 137. FREE, but you must register. etix.com.

Typhoon Texas Fireworks. City of Pflugerville and Typhoon Texas will host fireworks in the field located at the intersection of S.H. 130 and Pflugerville Parkway. 9:30 p.m. FREE. pflugervilletx.gov.

Red, White and Buda. We'll start the morning in downtown, bringing back our favorite 4th of July tradition – the bike parade! Head back to the park for evening festivities with vendors, food, live music and fireworks. 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Buda Amphitheatre and City Park, 204 San Antonio St. FREE. budaamphitheater.com.

Free Family Sundays. Tours of Mexican, Latino and Latin American art and culture. 2 and 4 p.m. Mexi-Arte Museum, 419 Congress Ave. FREE. mexic-artemuseum.org.

Liberty Fest 2021. Live music, food, children's activities and fireworks. Gates open at 2 p.m. Leander Public Library, 1011 S. Bagdad. Tickets are free but must be reserved in advance. leandertx.gov/parksrec/page/liberty-fest-2021.

Round Rock Express vs Sugar Land. Fireworks celebration after game. 6:06 p.m. Dell Diamond, 3400 E. Palm Valley Rd. milb.com/round-rock.

Mon 5

July Summer Family Craft Night. This program is sponsored by Friends of the Pflugerville Library. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. library.pflugervilletx.gov.

Tue 6

Pfarmers Market. The Pfarmers' Market brings fresh, locally grown and prepared foods to the Pflugerville community. 3 to 7 p.m. Pflugerville



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First United Methodist Church, 500 E. Pecan St. parks.pflugervilletx.gov.

Wed 7

Lego Lab. Build Lego WeDo 2.0 robots in an indoor workshop for ages 5+. 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr. FREE but registration limited and required. wblibrary.org.

Thu 8

Summer Family Program: Rockin' Rhythms. Calling all guitar rookies to jam out with School of Rock. 10 to 10:45 a.m. Bullock Texas State History Museum, 1800 Congress Ave. FREE. thestoryoftexas.com. 512-936-8746.

Bilingual Boogie. Join Sra. Garrett to learn basic Spanish vocabulary through singing, dancing, games and more. Online. 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Lake Travis Community Library, 1938 Lohman's Crossing. laketravislibrary.org. 512-263-2885.

Fri 9

CONTINUED: Seussical the Musical, see Thu 1.

Sat 10

Cardboard Boat Race. Get your team together and start designing! 10 a.m. to noon. Morris Memorial Pool, 802 N. Ave. C. elgintx.com.

Summer Movie Nights. Bring your blanket and furry friend on a leash to enjoy a movie on Saturday nights. Music 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Movie at 8:30 p.m. The Arboretum. FREE. thearboretum.com/events-news.

CONTINUED: Farmers Market, see Sat. 3; Vista Brewing Presents: "Live on the Lawn," see Sat 3; Seussical the Musical, see Thu 1.

Sun 11

Community Night Hours. The Thinkery's expanded summer schedule includes the return of weekly Community Night hours, which provide visitors the opportunity to enter the museum free of charge. 3 to 5 p.m. 1830 Simond Ave. thinkeryaustin.org.

Hartman Foundation Free Concerts in the Park. It's back! The Austin Symphony Orchestra's Hartman Foundation "Summer Concerts in the Park." 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. my.austinsymphony.org/hartmanconcerts.

Mon 12

CONTINUED: July Summer Family Craft Night, see Mon 5.

Tue 13

CONTINUED: Sprouts Storytime, see Thu 1; Pfarmer's Market, see Tue 6.

Wed 14

CONTINUED Lego Lab, see Wed 7.

Fri 16

TGIF Movie With Popcorn. Family-friendly classic movie with popcorn. Bring a drink! 1 to 3:30 p.m. Elgin Public Library Civic Center, 404 N. Main St. bit.ly/3iOZcy9.

71st Annual Taylor Rodeo. Wilco Events Center, 5350 Bill Pickett Trl. 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. \$12 - \$20. taylorrodeo.com.

Sat 17

Concert in Prete Plaza. The Round Rock Public Library presents a special concert in Prete Plaza with musical guest Canciones, raices y alas - CRYA. For all ages. 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. Prete Main Street Plaza, 221 E. Main St. roundrocktexas.gov.

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CONTINUED: Farmers Market, see Sat 3; 71st Annual Taylor Rodeo, see Fri 16; Vista Brewing Presents: "Live on the Lawn," see Sat 3.

Sun 18
Cardboard Boat Regatta. Join Lakeway Parks and Recreation for a splashing good time! 6 p.m. FREE. lakeway-tx.gov.
CONTINUED: Community Night Hours, see Sun 11; Hartman Foundation Free Concerts in the Park, see Sun 11.

Mon 19
CONTINUED: July Summer Family Craft Night, see Mon 5.

Tue 20
CONTINUED: Pfarmer's Market, see Tue 6; Sprouts Storytime, see Thu 1.

Wed 21
CONTINUED: Lego Lab, see Wed 7.

Thu 22
Reptile Show. Austin Reptile Shows will be bringing live snakes, turtles, lizards and other reptiles to the library in this outdoor presentation on the library's front porch. Registration required. 9 to 10 a.m. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr. wblibrary.org.

Bookmobile at McBee Elementary. Come visit the library away from the library. 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Mobile Library, McBee Elementary, 1001 W. Braker Ln. FREE. library.austintexas.gov.

Fri 23
Remember the Titans. Pack up your picnic blankets and pile everyone into the car! 8:45 to 11 p.m. Buda Amphitheater and City Park, 204 San Antonio Rd. budaamphitheater.com/arts-in-the-park.

Sat 24
CONTINUED: Farmers Market, see Sat. 3; Vista Brewing Presents: "Live on the Lawn," see Sat 3; Summer Movie Nights, see Sat 10.

Sun 25
CONTINUED: Community Night Hours, see Sun 11.

Mon 26
CONTINUED: July Summer Family Craft Night, see Mon 5.

Wed 28
CONTINUED: Lego Lab, see Wed 7.

Thu 29
Bookmobile at Galindo Elementary. Come visit the library away from the library. 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Mobile Library, Galindo Elementary, 3800 S. Second St. FREE. library.austintexas.gov.

Round Rock Express vs Oklahoma City. 7:05 p.m. Dell Diamond, 3400 E Palm Valley Blvd. milb.com/round-rock.

Fri 30
Music in the Park. Bring lawn chairs, pfurry friends, blankets, picnic baskets, friends and neighbors for a free evening of music, entertainment and relaxation. 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Pfluger Park, 515 City Park Rd. FREE. pflugervilletx.gov.

CONTINUED: Round Rock Express vs Oklahoma City, see Thu 29.

Sat 31
CONTINUED: Farmers Market, see Sat 3; Round Rock Express vs Oklahoma City. 6:05 p.m., see Thu 29.

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Paper Plate Balloon Tennis

Wimbledon is the oldest and most prestigious event in tennis, and it takes place in July. Here is a fun and simple activity to help you and your family get into the spirit of the game, even if you have never played. Better still, you can do it indoors to escape the summer heat while enjoying plenty of physical activity.

Start with a couple of paper plates, which you can decorate with crayons, markers, pencils or even paint. Give it your personal touch or simply create a bull's-eye design to help you focus on your target.

Next you'll need to fashion a handle, which you can make with a couple of extra-large craft sticks, popsicle sticks or even a ruler or unsharpened pencil. Fasten the handle to the back of the plate with glue or sturdy tape and you're ready to go. If you don't have those materials handy, ping pong paddles make a great alternative.

Before inflating the balloon, consider the age and ability level of your children. If they're younger, fill the balloon with more air so it will fly slower and be easier to hit. A less inflated balloon will fly faster and provide more of a challenge for older kids.



Designate a 'court' to play. Perhaps clear a space in your living room and create a net with a string, line of pillows or small piece of furniture. You can play a competitive game in which you score a point when the balloon touches the ground. Or try cooperative play and see how many times in a row you can keep the balloon going. If you can reach 100, you may be on your way to next year's Wimbledon.

 The YMCA of Austin offers tennis lessons and clinics for all ages at the Springs Family YMCA as well as Pickleball at multiple locations including the Town Lake, East Communities, Hays Communities and Northwest Family YMCAs. Pickleball is a combination of tennis and ping pong played on a smaller court with a lower net and a plastic ball that flies slower than a tennis ball. Find more details at austinyymca.org.



ROAD TRIP!

I've been there. You're packing for the summer car trip. You know that the destination will be amazing but the journey itself may present some challenges. So in order to keep the peace, you dole out the devices. Perhaps you embrace the moment for yourself with a special audiobook or podcast. Everyone in the family is set up with their preferred media, and the trip is more than manageable – it's downright pleasant. Victory!



And yet, there's this lingering thought, "We are mere inches away from each other hurtling through space and time – shouldn't we be engaging with each other in some way?" To which I offer this proposal: On one of those devices, set a timer to go off every 15 minutes, half hour, whatever feels right for an interruption. When the alarm rings, headphones come down and someone gets to choose an activity. Sing a silly song, scan the license plates around you, find the letters of the alphabet in billboards, invent a story about another carload. Engage the people who are near (literally) and dear to you. Have your moment. Then return to your regularly scheduled program. Another victory!

And if you're really lucky, you get to hear the cry only heard on car trips: "Mom, he's looking at me! Make him stop!"

Just in time for summer travel season, the PBS KIDS Video app allows downloads of episodes of favorite shows. Streaming not required! Check your device's app store for an update.

Benjamin Kramer, PhD, is the director of education for Austin PBS.

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JUST FOR GRINS

CATE BERRY

Berry is an Austin-based children's book author and mother of two. She also teaches writing workshops for young people at cateberry.com.



Look Up!

Yesterday, as I sat on Mopac, fuming, as one does in Mopac traffic, I spied the Frost Bank Tower. It's now overshadowed by the higher, hipper skyscrapers, of course, but I remembered the balks and groans during its construction. "Have you viewed the monstrosity? You can't see UT anymore! It doesn't fit. It's hideous. It's ruining the skyline."

Remembering made me giggle. How quaint we were, complaining about a well-planned, architecturally interesting, beautiful town addition built wondrously of glass. Then again, it was a simpler time. A moment in our history when there was only one big change happening, rather than hundreds. And for the most part, I'm okay with New Austin. I like change. I like meeting new transplants from Brooklyn, and yes, even California, standing in line at Wheatville buying cold Topo Chicos like proper Texans should.

Still fuming on Mopac, I fought to get home, recalling that I needed to reserve a day at the Blue Hole before it's booked the entire summer (of course, I'll be too late). But rolling by, the Frost Bank Tower sat in peace, its beauty scratching the big Texas sky.

People now say, dripping with nostalgia, it reminds them of an authentic Austin landmark. Or that it reminds them of Superman, a shard of kryptonite right in our own hometown. But to me, it's ripped straight from the pages of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.

As the cars honk and weave around me, angry because everyone's going to miss the Blue Hole sitting on Mopac all summer, I imagine Willie Wonka's glass elevator bursting through the top of Frost Bank's ceiling. The glass shatters with bravado. Charlie and Grampa Joe fly over Town Lake, dangling from the sky in their glass elevator. And I hear Mr. Wilder singing from the movie:

*Come with me, and you'll see,
in a land of pure imagination...*

A little imagination is all we need to survive change. Let's dream of weird skyscrapers, glass cars running on candy fumes on empty highways, childhood magic and golden tickets.

And a life completely devoid of Mopac.

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