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## REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS



**EDITOR**  
JESS ARCHER



**LEARNING CURVE**  
ALISON BOGLE



**LIFELINES**  
BRENDA SCHOOLFIELD



**FAMILY MATTERS**  
DR. BETTY RICHARDSON



**SMART SCREEN**  
DR. BENJAMIN KRAMER



**FILM REVIEW**  
JACK KYSER



Jojo, a 2023 cover kid winner, loves flowers, her cat and playing with her best friend.

Photo taken by Jordan Ashley Photography, Cedar Park.

PUBLISHER  
Kaye Kemper Lowak

EDITOR  
Jess Archer: editor2003@austinfamily.com

COPY EDITOR  
Barb Matijevich

ADVISING EDITORS  
Dr. Betty Richardson, Barb Matijevich

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER  
Jess Archer

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS  
Dorothy Bennett, Alison Bogle, Dr. Benjamin Kramer, Jack Kyser, Dr. Betty Richardson, Brenda Schoolfield, Sandi Schwartz

MEDIA RELATIONS  
Alison Bogle

GRAPHIC DESIGN  
Layout and Ads: Susie Forbes

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER  
Jordan Ashley Photography

ADVERTISING SALES  
Kaye Kemper Lowak: kaye2003@austinfamily.com

BUSINESS MANAGER  
Greg Lowak

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

JESS ARCHER

*Archer is a writer, a mom of two kids and a wife. She is the author of the memoir, "Finding Home with the Beatles, Bob Dylan and Billy Graham."*

Whether we like it or not, the phrase "spring cleaning" tends to be part of a vocabulary passed down from our parents and grandparents. There's just something about a new year and sunny spring weather that gets us thinking about freshening up our homes.

Instead of fighting the idea of spring cleaning, let's embrace it with a new take. With that in mind, our feature article by Sandi Schwartz helps readers understand the connection between clutter and stress. Read up on the many reasons why decluttering your home this spring can lead to more internal and external peace.

Why not take all that clutter in your home and host a garage sale? This April, our article by the YMCA gives

some great tips for hosting a garage sale with your family. There are so many lessons kids can learn from hosting a garage sale, so get inspired.

Alison Bogle, our education writer explains computer coding and how it can be beneficial for kids to learn. In addition, this month our media reviewer, Dorothy Bennett highlights two new middle grade novels that your kids will want to check out.

Don't forget to peruse our camp guide and education guide this month, and remember that our Family Matters column can be found in Spanish on our website: [www.austinfamily.com](http://www.austinfamily.com)

Enjoy your fresh, clean start, Austin.

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# Austin IN ACTION

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## April By the Numbers

78%

Share of people who eat chocolate bunnies' ears first.

Source: [www.wallethub.com](http://www.wallethub.com)

1970 First Earth Day

Source: [www.mentalfloss.com](http://www.mentalfloss.com)

1582

Believed to be the first year April Fool's Day was celebrated.

Source: [www.history.com](http://www.history.com)



## In Honor of Earth Day

This April 15th, Austinites have another opportunity to protect the planet and keep our city clean. Each April, Keep Austin Beautiful mobilizes thousands

of volunteers for an incredible day of community service throughout the greater Austin area in honor of Earth month. Residents can choose from 100 locations across Austin throughout all ten city council districts to remove litter and restore our beloved green spaces.

Each year, volunteers remove thousands of pounds of trash and recyclable material from the city's green spaces. For more information and to sign-up, go to [www.KeepAustinBeautiful.org](http://www.KeepAustinBeautiful.org)

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QR Scan to see "the funnest thing in the history of funnest things!"

## Two Austin Icons Equip Students for Success

Derrick Johnson's Defend the Dream Foundation unveiled its second 'Discovery Den' library makeover in Austin at Langford Elementary School on Thursday, March 23. The organization provides opportunities and resources to students attending Title 1 schools to reach their full potential in school and in life. The project was co-founded by Kendra Scott, who has an ongoing collaborative relationship with the Defend the Dream Foundation.

"I'm thrilled to continue our work in Austin and transform Langford Elementary's library

into a space that inspires kids to open a book and their minds for a brighter future," said Derrick Johnson, former NFL player and University of Texas alumnus.

"Education is a key component of our philanthropy pillar at Kendra Scott, and we're proud to provide ongoing support for the Defend the Dream Foundation and all the good they do," said Tom Nolan, CEO of Kendra Scott. "The new library at Langford Elementary will supply the right resources to continue to inspire the future leaders of tomorrow."

Langford Elementary School.  
Derrick Johnson cuts the ribbon at the grand opening of his second Discovery Den library.



## Pre-Schoolers Give Big for Literacy

Did you know that 34% of children entering kindergarten lack the basic skills needed to learn how to read? Without an at-home literacy routine, children risk delays in developing skills like problem-solving and decision making.

Students at Primrose schools throughout Austin have been doing their part to help combat the literacy crisis in America. In March, Primrose students and families participated in the Og's Bountiful Book Drive in honor of Read Across America Day.

Students and families donated new or gently used books which are then donated to charities across the country to support underserved children and families. More than 70,000 children at

over 480 Primrose schools nationwide participated in the book drive, which also weaves in lessons of compassion, generosity and giving without expectation.



*Photo credit: Primrose School*

*Primrose schools across Austin collect books for charity.*

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## 8 New Tips for Helping Picky Eaters

### FAMILY MATTERS

DR. BETTY RICHARDSON

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

**Q** We have two children ages three and eight who are both picky eaters. Do I cook separate meals for each of them? I'm wondering why children and adults become picky eaters.

**A** There are a variety of reasons kids become picky eaters. Often toddlers want to be independent and in control. Some kids don't like strong flavors or anything crunchy. Also, younger kids watch their older siblings for cues. If the older child is picky about foods, often the younger one will mimic this behavior.

Here are some updated tips for helping ease kids out of the picky eater phase.

1. Don't be a short order cook. Fix one meal for the family. Cooking special meals for children can exacerbate the situation.
2. Serve new foods in small amounts for at least 15 days. Studies have shown that after 10 -15 days, kids will begin to incorporate and enjoy a new food.
3. Don't bribe your kids to eat or punish them if they don't eat. If a child refuses a food, don't offer something else. Bribing and/or punishing encourages picky eating.
4. Involve your kids in meal planning and cooking to help build their appreciation of many types of foods.
5. Use what nutritionists call food bridges to introduce new foods with similar color, flavor and texture. For example, if a child likes pumpkin pie, try mashed sweet potatoes.
6. Have a three meal and three snacks schedule. If a child skips a meal, there is a scheduled snack later when they are hungry.

7. Hide vegetables in food and drinks. Spinach can be hidden in a smoothie. Spinach is a calcium source which kids need to build bones. Spaghetti can hide small pieces of celery, peppers, onions and carrots. Dips for vegetables or crackers can contain vegetables too.
8. Teach your kids to use the "No, thank you bite" approach when trying a new food. In this model, kids need to take at least one bite of a new food and then after are free to say "No, thank you." That way your kids are trying a new food and are also learning to be polite.

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## Family Garage Sales Teach Many Lessons



Hosting a family garage sale is not only a great way to declutter your home and make some extra cash, but it is also an environmentally friendly way to teach your kids several valuable life lessons.

In today's world where we are all becoming increasingly aware of the impact we have on the environment, hosting a garage sale is a smart and responsible way to do our part. It's also an opportunity to empower your children to take responsibility for their possessions and teach entrepreneurship, customer service and even philanthropy.

The first and most significant environmental benefit of hosting a garage sale is that it reduces waste. Hosting a garage sale means you are giving a new lease on old or unwanted items. Instead of throwing them out and adding to the growing piles of waste in landfills, you are "upcycling" your stuff. This can range from clothes, furniture, toys, and appliances, among other things. Let your kids take some ownership by sorting through their belongings and deciding what they want to keep and what to sell.

Next, you can enlist your kids' help in organizing and arranging your items for sale. Kids often enjoy helping with transactions. Who better than your 5-year-old to offer a first-person testimonial about the quality of the bicycle she has outgrown?

Lastly, a family garage sale also promotes a sense of community. You get to meet your neighbors and make new friends. It encourages conversations about environmental sustainability and promotes a culture where people value and take care of their possessions instead of tossing them away. Any unsold items can be donated to a local charity, ensuring that even more people benefit.

All in all, a family garage sale is a fantastic way of reducing waste, promoting the reuse of items, reducing our carbon footprint and building a sense of community.



Bring out family and friends to YMCA Camp Moody on Saturday, April 15, for Camp Play Day. This fun and FREE community event will be held in partnership with Bass Pro, Cabela's and the National Wildlife Federation from 10am-3pm. Plan for a day of outdoor camp-themed activities, engagement and giveaways. Learn more and RSVP at: [www.austinyymca.org/camp-play-day-april-15-2023/](http://www.austinyymca.org/camp-play-day-april-15-2023/).

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# How To Declutter Your Life To Reduce Stress

SANDI SCHWARTZ

*Schwartz is an award-winning author, freelance journalist and mother of two kids. She has written extensively about parenting, wellness and environmental issues.*  
[www.ecohappinessproject.com](http://www.ecohappinessproject.com)



How many times have you yelled at your kids to clean up the mess in their bedroom or playroom? Believe it or not, that clutter isn't just stressing you out because you are annoyed—it is stressing out the entire family because the sheer existence of clutter is linked to stress and anxiety. In fact, according to a study by UCLA's Center on Everyday Lives and Families (CELf), the amount of stress family members experience at home is directly proportional to the amount of stuff the family has accumulated. Why is this the case and what can we do about it?

## WHY CLUTTER CAUSES STRESS

It's no surprise that constantly seeing piles of stuff build up in our homes—whether it be papers, toys, loose pictures, laundry, gadgets, etc.—can take a toll on us, but the reasons are more complicated than you would think. Messy homes can leave us feeling anxious, helpless, overwhelmed, embarrassed, ashamed and/or guilty. We may not even recognize that clutter is the source of our stress, especially if it's been part of our environment for so long.

Clutter causes us to feel stressed because it:

- Overstimulates our mind and overloads our senses.
- Distracts us.
- Constantly signals our brain that we have more work to do.
- Makes it very hard for us to relax, both physically and mentally.
- Creates feelings of guilt and embarrassment when guests come over and see our disorganization. (We worry that we will be judged and even ridiculed for the way we live.)
- Frustrates us when we have trouble finding what we need. According to the American Demographics Society, Americans waste nine million hours each day searching for misplaced items, and 23 percent of adults say they pay bills late because they lose them.
- Stunts creativity and productivity. A study by the Princeton University Neuroscience Institute discovered that individuals surrounded by physical clutter in a disorganized environment are less productive and more distracted.

Clutter can also cause sleep problems and relationship issues due to arguments with family members about the mess. And if your clutter causes you to lose items and makes you late, this can impact school drop-off times, job performance and finances if your bills are not paid on time.

Many American families are overwhelmed by clutter, according to research by UCLA's Center on Everyday Lives and Families (CELf). During the study, researchers visited the homes of 32 families across the country and found that living in a cluttered space can create a subtle, constant sense of stress that impacts mood and self-

esteem. Additionally, they discovered that women in the household were more stressed out by the clutter than the rest of the family members. The mothers in the study had elevated levels of stress hormones when sorting out their possessions to try and get them more organized.

### WHY REDUCING CLUTTER HELPS

All that stuff taking over your closets, drawers and counter space starts to send out negative energy throughout your home. Those piles exude chaos, disorder, and confusion, which can stress us out. When we clean up the mess, our overall stress level starts to dissipate and we feel more positive energy to help us live happier, healthier lives.

According to Joyce Marter, Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and Founder of Urban Balance, "Our environment is a direct reflection of our internal mental health and vice versa. So, if our homes are disorganized, our minds may feel scattered as well." She suggests purging unnecessary items from our homes so that we can live more efficiently. When we have less clutter to manage, we save time and are less stressed overall.

Professional organizer Angela Betancourt has seen evidence firsthand of mental health benefits as a result of clients decluttering their home. They typically experience less stress and anxiety, more inner peace, a boost in self-confidence and improved health habits like more restful sleep.

Finally, decluttering tends to help us feel more confident about having guests in our homes. We no longer worry about being judged for our mess, relieving us of anxiety, embarrassment and relationship conflicts.

### HOW TO GET ORGANIZED

It may feel overwhelming and intimidating to start tackling your clutter. You may feel stressed even just thinking about getting rid of your belongings because it can muster up a sense of loss or bring up old memories. It's important to get over that emotional hurdle so that you can start sorting and throwing out items that no longer serve your family. Remind yourself that the process will ultimately lead to less stress!

Your goal is to simplify your environment by clearing out items that you no longer need or that no longer bring you joy and to clean up the areas where things tend

to get messy and disorganized. There are many websites, articles, books, professional organizers and stores that offer amazing tips to help you declutter your space. Find what is most effective for your family, but be careful not to get too overwhelmed by all the options.

Finally, follow this popular sorting method that most experts suggest:

1. **Keep.** These are items that you continue to need and use and that bring joy to your life.
2. **Sell.** These are items that you want to try and sell online through Craigslist or eBay or at a yard sale.

3. **Donate.** Your trash could be someone else's treasure. Give these items to individuals who could use them or donate them to a local charity.
4. **Trash.** These are unwanted or unused items that are too damaged to be donated or sold immediately. Please recycle if possible.
5. **Store.** If you really can't decide what to do, box it up and put a date on it. Look at it again in six months. Store in an attic, extra closet, garage or offsite storage facility to keep it out of the way.

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# Coding Offers More Benefits Than You Think



## THE LEARNING CURVE

ALISON BOGLE

*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. You can also catch her talking about articles from Austin Family magazine each Thursday morning on FOX 7 Austin.*

Simply put, coding is a way to communicate with a machine, and there are multiple coding languages used to tell computers to perform desired tasks. Many people think of a desktop or laptop computer when they think of coding, but in reality, coding is used everywhere – in your car’s electrical system, on websites, on your mobile phone and even in the software controlling the traffic signal near your neighborhood.

In the past, coding was relegated to adults, and we all know the stereotype of the quirky, pale coder working alone in the dark. In reality, that person tends to be more of the exception than the rule. Coding is actually a very collaborative, creative process that extends many potential benefits to those who choose to code professionally, or even just for fun. Thanks to some wonderful, age-appropriate materials, camps,

and programs, kids can now enjoy the benefits of coding as well.

### BENEFITS OF CODING

- **Second language benefits.** Studies have shown that being able to understand more than one language can lead to better working memory, focus and attention, and even an increase in the gray and white matter of the brain, which is believed to potentially mitigate age-related memory decline.

Coding is a language in its own right. When kids learn one or more of the multitudes of coding languages available, they are able to harness the same positive neurological effects seen in bilingual or multilingual kids.

- **Improved problem-solving skills.** Problem-solving involves taking a larger problem and breaking it down into smaller, more manageable parts. Coders are constantly challenged to examine a problem and to think of ways to approach a resolution. Repeated practice with problem-solving teaches your child to be more efficient and effective and can also spill over into how he or she approaches problems outside of coding.

- **Better perseverance and resilience.** Coding is nothing if not an exercise in “try, try again.” Once written, most code will contain multiple errors, so kids learn to take “failure” with a grain of salt. Errors lose the heavy weight they might carry in the non-coding world and simply become problems to tackle and solve.
- **Increased self-confidence.** True self-confidence comes from being able to trust in one’s abilities. As kids advance their coding and problem-solving skills, they experience a sense of pride in their accomplishments and build a solid foundation of confidence that comes from the knowledge that they can tackle future problems.
- **Fuels creativity.** While coding may seem like a logic-driven endeavor, it actually requires a lot of creativity. Solving coding problems necessitates an experimental and flexible mindset and kids who are creating projects from scratch are involved in brainstorming and conceptualizing.
- **Strengthens soft skills.** Coding relies heavily on so-called soft skills, such as communication, listening and collaboration. Contrary to many

people's perceptions, because of the problem-solving nature of coding, it is often team or community based. Coding is about working with others to solve problems.

- **Career/professional opportunities.** The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that job openings for software developers are predicted to grow 21 percent between 2018 and 2028. In addition, not all companies require their developers to have a four-year degree. Even if your child isn't interested in becoming a full-time software developer, having a working knowledge of coding is a valuable skill that might ultimately raise her resume above that of competitors.

#### WHEN TO START?

According to Stack Overflow's 2020 Developers Survey, over 54 percent of professional developers wrote their first line of code by the time they were 16 years old. Kids can actually start to learn even earlier, but you want to make sure that you are providing them with activities that are age appropriate. If you introduce something too difficult, kids might become frustrated and quit altogether. The following guidelines may be helpful:

**Ages three to five:** This is the perfect age to expose your child to coding fundamentals in an engaging way through books and games. Favorites include the board game Robot Turtles or the activity book "Hello Ruby: Adventures in Coding."

**Ages five to seven:** Kids in this age group can begin to explore activities that are more about coding than games. Scratch Jr. is a popular first foray into the coding world.

**Ages seven to nine:** During this period, depending on their previous exposure, kids are ready to learn to write real code. Tynker is a popular app that is often used in schools for kids of this age.

**Ages 10 and older:** Kids with prior experience can participate in more advanced, hands-on coding. MIT has developed a program called Scratch. It is downloadable software that lets kids drag and drop pieces of code to create games and other final products. Your child might also enjoy the Hopscotch app. Whether you choose to enroll your child in coding classes or camps, or have

her learn at home, you'll want to keep the emphasis on fun to avoid burnout. Check in with your child and have her teach you what he is learning – she will be excited to share her knowledge and your attention will be motivating. If you decide to go the learn-to-code-at-home-route, recreate the collaborative nature of coding by connecting her to

a coding club or by inviting a few of her friends over for a coding playdate. Whichever path you take, there are so many beneficial skills to develop through coding and so much fun to be had.



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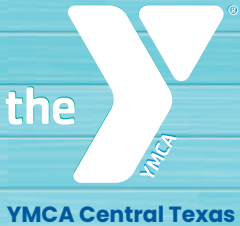
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<b>CAMP SWITCH WILLO</b>	6-13	<a href="http://www.switchwillo.com">www.switchwillo.com</a>	512-920-0554	N
<b>CLUB Z</b>	5-12	<a href="http://www.zsclubhouse.com">www.zsclubhouse.com</a>	512-219-0700	NW, S, SW
<b>CLUB SCIKIDZ</b>	4-15	<a href="http://www.clubscikidz.com">www.clubscikidz.com</a>	229-444-3231	C
<b>CODE WIZARDSHQ</b>	8-18	<a href="http://www.codewizardshq.com">www.codewizardshq.com</a>		Virtual
<b>CODING WITH KIDS</b>	5-18	<a href="http://www.codingwithkids.com">www.codingwithkids.com</a>		S, C, N, CP, RR, L, DP, BC
<b>IRON HORSE MOTOCROSS</b>	8-13	<a href="http://www.ironhorsecountry.com">www.ironhorsecountry.com</a>	512-917-5733	Bertram, TX
<b>COUNTRY HOME LEARNING CENTER</b>	5-13	<a href="http://www.countryhomelearningcenter.com">www.countryhomelearningcenter.com</a>	512-288-8220	N, S
<b>DANCE DISCOVERY</b>	3-18	<a href="http://www.dancediscovery.com">www.dancediscovery.com</a>	512-419-7611	C, RR
<b>FANTASTIC MAGIC CAMP</b>	5-12	<a href="http://www.magiccamp.com">www.magiccamp.com</a>	512-988-3045	C
<b>IDEA LAB</b>	5-13	<a href="http://www.austin.idealabkids.com">www.austin.idealabkids.com</a>	512-710-9654	C
<b>IMAGINE ARTS ACADEMY OF AUSTIN</b>	4-12	<a href="http://www.imagineartsacademy.com">www.imagineartsacademy.com</a>	512-892-1143	Multiple
<b>IRON HORSE MOTOCROSS</b>	8-13	<a href="http://www.ironhorsecountry.com">www.ironhorsecountry.com</a>	512-917-5733	Bertram, TX
<b>JUMP! GYMNASTICS</b>	3-10	<a href="http://www.jump-austin.com">www.jump-austin.com</a>	512-705-9659	S, C
<b>KIDSACTING SUMMER CAMPS</b>	4-18	<a href="http://www.kidsactingstudio.com">www.kidsactingstudio.com</a>	512-836-5437	18 Locations
<b>MAD SCIENCE</b>	4-12	<a href="http://www.austin.madscience.org">www.austin.madscience.org</a>	512-892-1143	Multiple
<b>PARAGON PREP SUMMER CAMP</b>	3yo-8th	<a href="http://www.paragonprep.org">www.paragonprep.org</a>	512-459-5040	N
<b>ROCK ABOUT CLIMBING</b>	9-18	<a href="http://www.rock-about.com">www.rock-about.com</a>	512-415-0804	Multiple
<b>SPICEWOOD COUNTRY CAMP</b>	3 ½-10 ½	<a href="http://www.spicewoodcountry.com">www.spicewoodcountry.com</a>	512-346-2992	NW
<b>STEPPING STONE SCHOOLS</b>	5-11	<a href="http://www.steppingstoneschool.com">www.steppingstoneschool.com</a>	512-459-0258	17 locations
<b>STEVE AND KATE'S CAMP</b>	4-12	<a href="http://www.steveandkatescamp.com">www.steveandkatescamp.com</a>		N, S
<b>SYNERGY DANCE</b>	2 & up	<a href="http://www.synergydance.com">www.synergydance.com</a>	512-327-4130	WL
<b>TEX-ARTS</b>	5-18	<a href="http://www.tex-arts.org">www.tex-arts.org</a>		LW
<b>UT RADIO-TELEVISION-FILM MEDIA CAMPS</b>	6-18	<a href="http://www.rtf.utexas.edu/camps">www.rtf.utexas.edu/camps</a>	512-471-6617	UT Campus
<b>YMCA AUSTIN</b>	4-14	<a href="http://www.austinyymca.org">www.austinyymca.org</a>	512-322-9622	Multiple
<b>YMCA CENTRAL TEXAS</b>	4-14	<a href="http://www.ymcactx.org">www.ymcactx.org</a>	512-250-9622	RR, CP, G, H

**LOCATIONS**

N, C, S, E, W, NW, SW  
for Austin locations  
BC = Bee Caves

CP = Cedar Park  
G = Georgetown  
L = Leander

PF = Pflugerville  
RR = Round Rock  
WL = Westlake

## OVERNIGHT CAMPS

<b>CAMP CHAMPIONS</b>	6-17	www.campchampions.com	830-598-2571	Marble Falls, TX
<b>CAMP EAGLE</b>	6-18	www.campeagle.org	830-928-7288	Rocksprings, TX
<b>CAMP HEART O' THE HILLS FOR GIRLS</b>	6-16	www.hohcamp.com	830-238-4650	Hunt, TX
<b>CAMP STEWART FOR BOYS</b>	6-16	www.campstewart.com	830-238-4670	Hunt, TX
<b>NEWK'S OUTBACK ADVENTURE CAMP</b>	8-17	www.newktennis.com	830-625-9105	New Braunfels, TX
<b>SUGAR &amp; SPICE RANCH CAMP</b>	5 & up	www.texasHORSECAMPS.com	830-460-8487	Bandera, TX
<b>YMCA CAMP TWIN LAKES</b>	6-16	www.ymcactx.org	512-250-9622	CP

## ARTS

<b>A1 CAMP CREATOR</b>	6-13	www.creatorcamp.org	713-417-9025	N, S
<b>AUSTIN FILM FESTIVAL</b>	9-18	www.austinfilmfestival.com	512-478-4795	C
<b>BADGERDOG CREATIVE WRITING CAMPS</b>	9-18	www.austinlibrary.org/creative-writing-camps	512-542-0076	C
<b>BEE CAVES ART FOUNDATION YOUNG ARTISTS</b>	5-12	https://beecavearts.foundation/	512-731-5868	BC
<b>DANCE DISCOVERY</b>	3-18	www.dancediscovery.com	512-419-7611	C, RR
<b>IMAGINE ARTS ACADEMY OF AUSTIN</b>	4-12	www.imagineartsacademy.com	512-892-1143	Multiple
<b>KIDSACTING SUMMER CAMPS</b>	4-18	www.kidsactingstudio.com	512-836-5437	18 Locations
<b>SCHOOL OF ROCK MUSIC CAMP</b>	6-18	www.schoolofrock.com	512-246-7625	RR, N, SW
<b>SYNERGY DANCE</b>	2 & up	www.synergydance.com	512-327-4130	WL
<b>TEX-ARTS</b>	5-18	www.tex-arts.org		LW
<b>UT RADIO-TELEVISION-FILM MEDIA CAMPS</b>	6-18	www.rtf.utexas.edu/camps	512-471-6617	UT Campus

## SPORTS

<b>AUSTIN YACHT CLUB</b>	5-16	www.austinyachtclub.net	512-266-1336	LT
<b>BRANDY PERRYMAN SHOOTING CAMP</b>	7-16	www.bperrymanshootingcamp.com	512-799-8591	13 locations
<b>CAMP DOUBLECREEK</b>	4-14	www.campdoublecreek.com	512-255-3661	PF
<b>CAMP ROUND ROCK</b>	4-14	www.ymcactx.org	512-246-9622	RR
<b>CAMP SWITCH WILLO</b>	6-13	www.switchwillo.com	512-920-0554	N
<b>CLUB Z</b>	5-12	www.zsclubhouse.com	512-219-0700	NW, S, SW
<b>IRON HORSE MOTOCROSS</b>	8-13	www.ironhorsecountry.com	512-917-5733	Bertram, TX
<b>JUMP! GYMNASTICS</b>	3-10	www.jump-austin.com	512-705-9659	S, C
<b>NEWK'S OUTBACK ADVENTURE CAMP</b>	8-17	www.newktennis.com	830-625-9105	New Braunfels, TX
<b>ROCK ABOUT CLIMBING</b>	9-18	www.rock-about.com	512-415-0804	Multiple
<b>SPICEWOOD COUNTRY CAMP</b>	3 ½-10 ½	www.spicewoodcountry.com	512-346-2992	NW
<b>STEVE AND KATE'S CAMP</b>	4-12	www.steveandkatescamp.com		N, S
<b>YMCA AUSTIN</b>	4-14	www.austinyymca.org	512-322-9622	Multiple
<b>YMCA CENTRAL TEXAS</b>	4-14	www.ymcactx.org	512-250-9622	RR, CP, G, H

## ACADEMIC

<b>CLUB SCIKIDZ</b>	4-15	www.clubscikidz.com	229-444-3231	C
<b>COUNTRY HOME LEARNING CENTER</b>	5-13	www.countryhomelearningcenter.com	512-288-8220	N
<b>FANTASTIC MAGIC CAMP</b>	5-12	www.magiccamp.com	512-988-3045	C
<b>IDEA LAB</b>	5-13	www.austin.idealabkids.com	512-710-9654	C
<b>MAD SCIENCE</b>	4-12	www.austin.madscience.org	512-892-1143	Multiple locations
<b>PARAGON PREP SUMMER CAMP</b>	3yo-8th	www.paragonprep.org	512-459-5040	N
<b>STEPPING STONE SCHOOLS</b>	5-11	www.steppingstoneschool.com	512-459-0258	17 locations

## TECHNOLOGY

<b>CODE WIZARDSHQ</b>	8-18	www.codewizardshq.com		Virtual
<b>CODING WITH KIDS</b>	5-18	www.codingwithkids.com		S, C, N, CP, RR, L, DP, BC
<b>IDEA LAB</b>	5-13	www.austin.idealabkids.com	512-710-9654	C

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Bible-based adventure camps for ages 6-17.

Seven day sessions starting May 30th through July 29th.

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Austin's Most Fun Summer Camp!

Camps are weekly  
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Ages \*3-10  
\*Must be potty trained

**FULL DAY (8:30-3:00) \$375**  
**HALF DAY (9:00-1:00) \$325**  
\$100 deposit, per week/per child  
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MAY 30-JUNE 2 Superhero  
JUNE 5-9 Rockstar  
JUNE 12-16 Space Odyssey  
JUNE 19-23 Robots

JUNE 26-30 Olympic Stars  
JULY 5-7 Mystery Camp  
JULY 10-14 Rainforest Funfair  
JULY 17-21 Jurassic Journey

JULY 24-28 Pirates!  
JULY 31 - AUG 4 Shipwreck  
AUGUST 7-11 Mermaid Island

Register now! [www.JumpGymnastics.com](http://www.JumpGymnastics.com) ☎ 512-593-6226

<b>Jump! North</b> 2117 W Anderson Ln North@jump-austin.com	<b>Jump! Domain</b> 10910 Domain Dr #112 Domain@jump-austin.com	<b>Jump! South</b> 6800 West Gate Blvd #111 South@jump-austin.com
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 www.newkennis.com




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[rock-about.com/kids-camps](http://rock-about.com/kids-camps)  
 or call 512-415-0804

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For more details, please visit us at:

[www.CampStewart.com](http://www.CampStewart.com) [www.HOHcamp.com](http://www.HOHcamp.com)






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# SMART SCREEN TIME

DR. BENJAMIN KRAMER

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



## Exploring the Outdoors

Welcome to April, everyone, the most beautiful month in Austin. If you're like many central Texans, you've already tried to maximize your time outside

this spring, before the moderately hot weather turns truly hot.

One characteristic of our current era that alternately amuses and terrifies me is watching folks walk around with their heads down, looking at screens. On the one hand, I'm glad they're outside, soaking up Vitamin D and listening to birds. On the other hand, "Look out for that car!" Sometimes, the screen-viewing is just an extension of what they were doing inside - checking social media, watching video, shopping. And sometimes, the app is specifically for the outdoors, like using a map to find a house, or playing Pokémon Go. I'd like to offer some other recommendations for outdoor app use, especially for those kids who aren't otherwise inclined to head outside.

There are some remarkable apps that can help you identify plants, birds, rocks and even planes. Within the PBS realm, Nature Cat's Great Outdoors app (free, iOS, Android, phone or tablet) offers 100 daily natural adventures for kids and the ability to log their findings

by photo, sound, text and stamps in a virtual logbook. Nico & Nor Shadow play (free, iPad only) sends kids on quests to find cool shadows and monitor their changes, and Nico & Nor Plant Journal (free, iPad only) can be used to track growth and health in the garden.

There are some everyday features on phones and tablets that can also be used to have fun outside. Kids can take pictures of different shapes of leaves, then trace the outlines or the veins by drawing directly on the photo. They can transfer what they've learned to pencil and paper, replicating the outline and the veins within. Similarly, kids can take photos of animals, then use their photos to build Play-Doh models back at home. We know that some of history's finest painters worked from photos - Monet, Georgia O'Keefe, even Leonardo da Vinci if you count the camera obscura - so have your kids snap a beautiful scene, then set up an easel in your kitchen!

**EXPLORE THE OUTDOORS**  
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# Austin Family Magazine's EDUCATION GUIDE

PRIVATE SCHOOL	GRADES	LOCATION(S)	PHONE	WEBSITE
BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL	PreK4-12	North Austin	512-835-5983	<a href="http://www.brentwoodchristian.org">www.brentwoodchristian.org</a>
CATHEDRAL SCHOOL OF ST. MARY'S	PreK3-8	Downtown Austin	512-476-1480	<a href="http://www.smcschoolaustin.org">www.smcschoolaustin.org</a>
CHALLENGER SCHOOL	PreK-8	Avery Ranch	512-341-8000	<a href="http://www.challengerschool.com">www.challengerschool.com</a>
	PreSch-K	Pond Springs	512-258-1299	<a href="http://www.challengerschool.com">www.challengerschool.com</a>
	PreSch-K	Round Rock	512-255-8844	<a href="http://www.challengerschool.com">www.challengerschool.com</a>
HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK-8	North Austin	512-246-4455	<a href="http://www.holyfamilycs.org">www.holyfamilycs.org</a>
KIRBY HALL SCHOOL	PreK4-12	Central Austin	512-474-1770	<a href="http://www.kirbyhallschool.org">www.kirbyhallschool.org</a>
PARAGON PREP	3 yrs-8	North Austin	512-459-5040	<a href="http://www.paragonprep.com">www.paragonprep.com</a>
REDEEMER LUTHERAN SCHOOL	15 mos.-Grade 8	North Austin	512-451-6478	<a href="http://www.redeemerschool.net">www.redeemerschool.net</a>
SAN JUAN DIEGO CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL	9-12	South Austin	512-804-1935	<a href="http://www.sjdchs.org">www.sjdchs.org</a>
SANTA CRUZ CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK-8	Buda	512-312-2137	<a href="http://www.sccstx.org">www.sccstx.org</a>
ST. AUSTIN CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK3-8	Downtown Austin	512-477-3751	<a href="http://www.staustinschool.org">www.staustinschool.org</a>
ST. DOMINIC SAVIO CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL	9-12	North Austin	512-388-8846	<a href="http://www.saviochs.org">www.saviochs.org</a>
ST. GABRIEL'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK-8	West Austin	512-327-7755	<a href="http://www.sgs-austin.org">www.sgs-austin.org</a>
ST. HELEN CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK4-8	Georgetown	512-869-3244	<a href="http://www.shcsliions.org">www.shcsliions.org</a>
ST. IGNATIUS MARTYR CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK3-8	South Austin	512-442-8547	<a href="http://www.school.st-ignatius.org">www.school.st-ignatius.org</a>
ST. LOUIS CATHOLIC SCHOOL	K-8 and Montessori	North Austin	512-614-6622	<a href="http://www.slcsaustin.org">www.slcsaustin.org</a>
ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK3-12	Taylor	512-352-2313	<a href="http://www.stmarystaylor.org">www.stmarystaylor.org</a>
ST. MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC ACADEMY	9-12	West Austin	512-328-2323	<a href="http://www.smca.com">www.smca.com</a>
ST. THERESA'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK-8	North Austin	512-451-7105	<a href="http://www.st-theresa.org">www.st-theresa.org</a>

CHARTER SCHOOL	GRADES	LOCATION(S)	PHONE	WEBSITE
BASIS Austin	K-8 expanding to 12	North Austin	737-263-5890	<a href="http://www.basisedtx.com/austin/">www.basisedtx.com/austin/</a>
BASIS Pflugerville	K-8 expanding to 12	Pflugerville	737-263-5890	<a href="http://www.basisedtx.com/pflugerville/">www.basisedtx.com/pflugerville/</a>
BASIS Cedar Park (Opening August 2023, taking applications now)	K-9 expanding to 12	Cedar Park	737-263-5890	<a href="http://www.enrollbasistx.com/cedarpark/">www.enrollbasistx.com/cedarpark/</a>
CHAPARRAL STAR ACADEMY	K-12	North Austin	512-989-2672	<a href="http://www.chaparralstaracademy.com">www.chaparralstaracademy.com</a>
HARMONY SCIENCE ACADEMY – Austin	PK-8	North Austin	512-835-7900	<a href="http://www.hsaaustin.harmonytexas.org">www.hsaaustin.harmonytexas.org</a>
HARMONY SCHOOL OF INNOVATION – Austin	PK-5	Southeast Austin	512-300-0895	<a href="http://www.hsiaustin.harmonytexas.org">www.hsiaustin.harmonytexas.org</a>
HARMONY SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE – Austin	6-12	Southeast Austin	512-693-0000	<a href="http://www.hseastin.harmonytexas.org">www.hseastin.harmonytexas.org</a>
HARMONY SCIENCE ACADEMY – Cedar Park	PK-5	Cedar Park	512-251-5000	<a href="http://www.hsacp.harmonytexas.org">www.hsacp.harmonytexas.org</a>

HARMONY SCHOOL OF ENDEAVOR – Austin	PK-12	North Austin	512-284-9880	www.hspaustin.harmonytx.org
HARMONY SCHOOL OF SCIENCE – Austin	PK-5	North Austin	512-821-1700	www.hssaustin.harmonytx.org
HARMONY SCIENCE ACADEMY – Pflugerville	6-12	Pflugerville	512-494-5151	www.hsapflugerville.harmonytx.org
NYOS	PreK-12	North Austin	512-583-6907	www.nyos.org
VALOR South Austin	K-12	South	512-646-4170	www.valoreducation.org/southaustin
VALOR North Austin	K-10 expanding to 12	North	512-646-4168	www.valoreducation.org/northaustin
VALOR Kyle	K-8 expanding to 12	Kyle	512-521-0600	www.valoreducation.org/kyle
VALOR Leander (Opening Fall 2023)	K-8 expanding to 12	Leander	512-729-0159	www.valoreducation.org/leander

KINDERGARTEN/PREK MONTESSORI DAY CARE/AFTER-SCHOOL	GRADES	LOCATION(S)	PHONE	WEBSITE
ASHLEY'S DROP-IN CHILD CARE	Infant-12 yrs.	North Austin	512-872-2755	www.ashleysplayhouseaustin.com
COUNTRY HOME LEARNING CENTER	Infant-12 yrs.	North Austin	512-331-1442	www.countryhomelearningcenter.com
	Infant-12 yrs.	South Austin	512-288-8220	www.countryhomelearningcenter.com
EXTEND-A-CARE YMCA FOR KIDS	3 yrs.- 8	77 area campuses	512-472-9402	www.austinyymca.org/branches/extend-care-ymca
KINDERCARE	6 wks.-5 yrs.	Anderson Mill	833-905-3276	www.kindercare.com/regions/austin
	6 wks.-5 yrs.	Bergstrom Tech	512-386-5541	www.kindercare.com/regions/austin
	6 wks.-5 yrs.	Brushy Creek	833-905-3276	www.kindercare.com/regions/austin
	6 wks.-5 yrs.	Round Rock	512-244-4956	www.kindercare.com/regions/austin
	6 wks.-12 yrs.	Emerald Wood	512-443-9515	www.kindercare.com/regions/austin
Prodigy Child Development Center		NW Austin	512-835-2443	www.kindercare.com/regions/austin
	6wks.-12 yrs.	South Congress	512-443-7765	www.kindercare.com/regions/austin
NICHOLSON EARLY CHILDHOOD	18 mos.-5 yrs.	NW Austin	512-243-6539	www.nicholsonececenter.com
SNAPDRAGON PRESCHOOL	3-5 yrs. (Must be potty trained)	North Austin	512-593-6226	www.snapdragonpreschool.com
SPICEWOOD COUNTRY SCHOOL	2-5 yrs.	North Austin	512-346-2992	www.spicewoodcountry.com
STEPPING STONE SCHOOLS	Infant-12yrs	17 locations throughout Austin	512-459-0258	www.steppingstoneschool.com

**See Private School listings for:**

- Holy Family Catholic School
- Kirby Hall School
- Redeemer Lutheran School
- Santa Cruz Catholic School
- St. Austin Catholic School
- St. Gabriel's Catholic School
- St. Helen Catholic School
- St. Ignatius Martyr Catholic School
- St. Louis Catholic School
- St. Mary's Catholic School
- St. Theresa's Catholic School

**See Charter School listings for:**

- Harmony School of Innovation
- Harmony Science Academy
- Harmony School of Endeavor
- Harmony School of Science
- Valor South
- Valor North
- Valor Kyle

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# DOES MY CHILD HAVE SCOLIOSIS?

## LIFELINES

BRENDA SCHOOLFIELD

*Schoolfield is a medical writer and editor who lives in Austin. Sugar, her cocker spaniel, and sometimes a rescue foster dog or two keep her company while she writes.*

Scoliosis affects about 1 in every 40 people according to the National Scoliosis Foundation. The term scoliosis is derived from the ancient Greek word skolios, which means bent or crooked. Scoliosis is a deformity of the spine—instead of being straight, it curves sideways and twists. In most cases, there is no known cause for this condition, and nothing can be done to prevent it. If someone in your family has had scoliosis, your child is at increased risk of developing it.

### SCOLIOSIS IS MORE PREVALENT IN ADOLESCENTS

Anyone can be diagnosed with scoliosis—from babies to the elderly. Most of the time, however, it is diagnosed in children between 10 and 15 years old. Girls and boys get scoliosis at about the same rate. Yet girls are eight times more likely than boys to need treatment for a more severe condition. A diagnosis of scoliosis is made when the side-to-side curvature of the spine is more than ten degrees. The more curved the spine is, the more severe the condition.

### WHAT ARE THE SIGNS?

During periods of rapid growth, children can develop scoliosis without parents noticing it. Sometimes a child's friends or teammates are the first to observe

the signs. Watch for the following:

- One shoulder, shoulder blade, ribs or hip is higher than the other side
- One shoulder blade or hip stands out more than the other
- The head isn't centered on the body
- One side of the ribcage sticks out
- The spine is curved sideways when you look at the child from the back

### EARLY DETECTION IS CRITICAL

A spinal screening takes about 30 seconds. This simple noninvasive assessment may help save a child from a lifetime of problems associated with scoliosis. Deformities that result can impact a child's self-esteem or limit physical activity. A lifetime of back pain is another side effect. If the curve of the spine is

severe, it can reduce the amount of space in the chest. Then the heart and lungs may not be able to function normally. Early treatment can stop the curve from getting worse or help reduce the size of the curve.

### SPINAL SCREENING PROGRAM IN TEXAS

The Texas Legislature established a Spinal Screening Program to identify students who may have scoliosis so that they can be referred to their healthcare providers for followup. Here is the recommended schedule:

- Girls will be screened two times, once in 5th grade and again in 7th grade
- Boys will be screened one time in the 8th grade

All children must comply with the screening requirement unless parents provide documentation of screening by a licensed professional or a statement of religious conflict.

Screening is done by a certified spinal screener who has received special training, or by a licensed healthcare professional. Children may be asked to pin up long hair. All children must take their shoes off for the screening.

The screener will ask the child to take several different positions as they look for spinal abnormalities. A standard exam is the Adam's Forward Bend Test: bend forward with the knees straight until the back is parallel to the floor; keep the palms of the hands together and hanging down as if diving into a pool.

Students who test positive for abnormal spinal curvature will be rescreened to confirm the findings. If the second screening is positive, the child will be referred to their healthcare provider for follow-up.

### HOW IS SCOLIOSIS TREATED?

When a child has signs of scoliosis, your provider will order tests, such as x-rays, to confirm a diagnosis. According to the Texas Spinal Screening Program Guidelines, more than 90 percent of students with scoliosis require no treatment other

than observation. If the curvature of the spine is mild, the child will be monitored to see if the curve gets worse. If the curve is progressing, bracing can be very effective if the child wears the brace as prescribed. About 30,000 children per year are fitted for a brace. For severe cases, surgery is required.

To learn more about scoliosis, watch *Catch the Curve*, a YouTube video

produced by the National Scoliosis Foundation at <https://youtu.be/wQmBIhnHnAE>.

### MYTHS ABOUT SCOLIOSIS

Scoliosis is not caused by poor posture, heavy backpacks, sports activities or spending hours slumped over while staring at a cell phone or device.



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**NICU graduates are invited  
to cross the stage every hour**

# April 2023

## calendar

Go to [austinfamily.com](http://austinfamily.com) for expanded listings.

Check our calendar online which is updated daily. Any family-friendly events can be posted at [www.austinfamily.com](http://www.austinfamily.com) and will be made live once approved. Certain restrictions apply.

### Sat 1

**ABC Kite Festival.** 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Held every spring, the ABC Kite Fest is one of Austin's most beloved, family-friendly traditions. Zilker Park, Barton Spring Rd. FREE. [www.abckitefest.org](http://www.abckitefest.org).

#### Community Wide Easter Celebration.

10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Join us for a first community wide Easter celebration. We are excited to be hosting games, crafts, games, egg hunts and community resources. North Austin YMCA, [www.austinyymca.org](http://www.austinyymca.org).

**Kyle Easter Eggstravaganza.** 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The community is invited to join the fun. 1231 W. Center St. [www.cityofkyle.com](http://www.cityofkyle.com).

**Play for All Special Needs Easter Egg Hunt 2023.** 10 - 11 a.m. Please note that all hunts have the same start time this year. Play for All Park, 151 North A.W. Grimes Blvd. [www.roundrocktexas.gov](http://www.roundrocktexas.gov).

**Easter Eggstravaganza.** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Enjoy egg hunt, food, activities and more. Crosspoint Church, 3800 Shell Rd. FREE. [www.crosspointgtx.com](http://www.crosspointgtx.com).

**Happy Hoppy Easter Hunt.** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Join us for this FREE community Easter celebration. We'll have crafts, games, egg hunt and more. East Communities YMCA, [www.austinyymca.org](http://www.austinyymca.org).

**Rock of Ages: Teen Edition.** 1 - 3 p.m. and 6 - 8 p.m. Go back to the times of big bands, big egos, big guitar solos and even bigger hair! TexARTS Association, 2300 Lohman's Spur Rd. \$20. [www.tex-arts.org](http://www.tex-arts.org).

**EGGstravaganza.** 2 p.m. City Park, 502 Hurst Creek Rd. [www.lakeway-tx.gov](http://www.lakeway-tx.gov).

**Pop-Up Picnic.** 6 -10 p.m. Family-friendly programming and activities, live music from some of Austin's best musicians and special sweet treats. Moody Amphitheater, 1401 Trinity St. [www.waterloogreenway.org](http://www.waterloogreenway.org).

### Sun 2

**Eggstravaganza.** 12 p.m. Come out to Benbrook Ranch Park as we disperse 30,000 eggs across FIVE separate egg hunts. Leander Public Library, 1011 S. Bagdad. [www.leandertx.gov](http://www.leandertx.gov).

### Tue 4

#### Hometown Lunchtime Parklet Shows.

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Our Spring 2023 season of free live lunchtime concerts is filled with jazz, blues, rock n roll, soul, folk and more. Downtown Round Rock, 221 E. Main St. [www.roundrocktexas.gov](http://www.roundrocktexas.gov).

**Kids Club.** 3:30 - 4 p.m. Kids Ages 5-8. Join us for an engaging crafting, reading, building or exploring afternoon. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**BoomBox Hero: Hip-Hop Fu Dance.** 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. A program for students interested in street dance, popping and animation as an expression of life and culture. Asian American Resource Center, 8401 Cameron Rd. FREE. [www.austintexas.gov](http://www.austintexas.gov).

### Wed 5

**Music on Main** (Spring 2023). 7 - 9 p.m. Music on Main returns for the Spring 2023 season, when we'll present a roster of diverse genres of music, rock n roll, Tejano, country, boogie Prete Main St. Plaza, 221 East Main St. [www.roundrocktexas.gov](http://www.roundrocktexas.gov).

### Thu 6

**Flashlight Egg Hunt & Movie in the Park.** 6 - 10 p.m. Movie in the park after the last egg hunt. Old Settlers Park, [www.roundrocktexas.gov](http://www.roundrocktexas.gov).

**CONTINUED:** Hometown Lunchtime Parklet Shows, see Tue 4.

### Fri 7

**Texas VegFest.** 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Texas VegFest is a FREE family-friendly, educational event. Fiesta Gardens West End, 2100 Jesse Segovia. FREE. [www.texasvegfest.com](http://www.texasvegfest.com).

#### NCHM Annual Easter Egg Dye-o-Rama.

12 - 4 p.m. Egg dyeing, live music, ice cream making, scavenger hunts and more. Neill-Cochran House Museum, 2310 San Gabriel St. [www.nchmuseum.org](http://www.nchmuseum.org).

### Sat 8

**2023 Egg Palooza at Pfennig Park.** 2 - 5 p.m. Join us for a treat-filled hunting ground at Pfennig Park, 1301 West Pfennig Lane. [www.parks.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.parks.pflugervilletx.gov).

**8th Annual Egg Roll.** Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum, 2313 Red River St. [www.lbjlibrary.org](http://www.lbjlibrary.org).

**CONTINUED:** Hometown Lunchtime Parklet Shows, see Tue 4.

### Wed 12

**CONTINUED:** Music on Main (Spring 2023), see Wed 5.

### Thu 13

**Board Game Night** (All Ages). 5:30 - 8 p.m. Come join us for a fun night of playing board games! Pflugerville Recreation Center, 400 Immanuel Rd. [www.parks.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.parks.pflugervilletx.gov).

**CONTINUED:** Hometown Lunchtime Parklet Shows, see Tue 4.

### Sat 15

**Squirrel Fest.** 4 - 8 p.m. A family-friendly celebration of spring. Join us for music, market, movies, munchies and more. Pease Park, 1100 Kingsbury St. FREE

**Parents Night Out at Springs.** 5:30 - 9:30 p.m. Have a great evening out while the kids have a blast. Springs Family YMCA. [www.austinyymca.org](http://www.austinyymca.org).

### Sun 16

**Statesman Capitol 10,000.** 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Come out and support the runners in the largest race in Texas. Starts and ends downtown. [www.10K.cap10k.com/](http://www.10K.cap10k.com/).

### Tue 18

**CONTINUED:** Hometown Lunchtime Parklet Shows, see Tue 4.

### Wed 19

**CONTINUED:** Music on Main (Spring 2023), see Wed 5.

### Fri 21

**HEB Outreach.** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Visit our table at the HEB in Marble Falls to learn about State Parks including Inks Lake and cool upcoming events. HEB, 1503 Hwy 1431. [www.tpwd.texas.gov](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov).

**CONTINUED:** Enchanted Forest Walk, see Mon 17.

### Sat 22

**Earth Day ATX 2023.** 12 - 6 p.m. There will be a kid zone with crafts, games, butterfly walk-thru, food and stage entertainment. Huston-Tillotson College, 900 Chicon St. FREE. [www.earthdayaustin.com](http://www.earthdayaustin.com).

**Madagascar Jr.** 2 - 4 p.m. and 6 - 8 p.m. Join Alex the Lion, Marty the Zebra, Melman the Giraffe, Gloria the hip Hippo and, of course, those hilarious, plotting penguins as they bound TexARTS Association, 2300 Lohman's Spur Rd. \$20. [www.tex-arts.org](http://www.tex-arts.org).

### Sun 23

**CONTINUED:** Madagascar Jr, see Sat 22.

### Mon 24

**CONTINUED:** Enchanted Forest Walk, see Mon 17; Family Night, see Mon 3.

### Tue 25

**CONTINUED:** Hometown Lunchtime Parklet Shows, see Tue 4.

### Wed 26

**CONTINUED:** Music on Main (Spring 2023), see Wed 5.

### Thu 27

**Movies in the Park: LEGO Batman.** 7 - 10 p.m. Within the DC superhero dimension of the Lego multiverse, Batman protects Gotham City and fights crime. Dove Springs District Park, 5801 Ainez St. FREE. [www.austinparks.org](http://www.austinparks.org).

**CONTINUED:** Hometown Lunchtime Parklet Shows, see Tue 4.

### Fri 28

**Founders Day Festival 2023.** 4 p.m. to 12 a.m. The three-day celebration kicks off with the Grand Parade, free music and entertainment, the Mighty Thomas Carnival and food. Downtown District, 511 Mercer. FREE. [www.cityofdrippingsprings.com](http://www.cityofdrippingsprings.com).

#### Georgetown's Annual Red Poppy Festival.

6 - 10 p.m. Sat and Sun 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Come celebrate Georgetown and their poppies. Georgetown's Historic Town Square, 103 W. 7th St. FREE. [www.poppy.georgetown.org](http://www.poppy.georgetown.org).

### Sat 29

#### Austin Humane Society's Annual Kitten Shower.

12 - 3 p.m. Every year, from spring through late summer, the Austin Humane Society is inundated with teeny, tiny kittens. Austin Humane Society, 124 W Anderson Ln. FREE. [www.austinhumanesociety.org](http://www.austinhumanesociety.org).

**April 29th Family Campout.** 2 p.m. to 10 a.m. Camp among the spring flowers and under the stars. We provide the tents, meals and s'mores around the campfire. YMCA Camp Moody, 1220 Old San Antonio Rd. [www.austinyymca.org](http://www.austinyymca.org).

**Farm Day.** 2 - 4 p.m. Family event featuring farm-themed games, crafts and other activities on the grounds of the Heritage House Museum located at 901 Old Austin Hutto Heritage Park, 901 Old Austin Hutto Rd. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**CONTINUED:** Georgetown's Annual Red Poppy Festival, see Fri 28; Founders Day Festival 2023, see Fri 28; Madagascar Jr, see Sat 22.

## Myth and Legend: Two New Middle Grade Novels



With Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month almost upon us, here are two up-and-coming releases for your adventurous middle-grade readers! Momo Arashima actually can see a fox wearing pants and dancing in the school yard. Misa Sugiura's, "Momo Arashima Steals the Sword of the Wind" is a witty, fast-paced adventure that skillfully immerses the reader

in Japanese mythology. Momo encounters a murderous shikome, a ghost crab army and talking mice, all while having genuine conversations about middle school social dynamics. Hey, even popular kids have feelings, and those popular kids may grow to realize that others have feelings too. With the same pacing and narrative style as "Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief," Sugiura keeps the reader engaged with a cliffhanger per punchy chapter. The trio of main characters gel together throughout their journey without losing any of those youthful imperfections that make them so charming.



In "Lei and the Fire Goddess," by Malia Maunakea, Anna Leilani Kama'ehu is garnering folktales from her grandmother, or Tutu. While spending summer vacation in Hawaii, Anna/Lei straddles two cultures and two names to her increasing frustration. But then Tutu's folktales come to life. Author Maunakea excels at depicting Anna's fascinating dive into her own mythological

heritage interspersed with a middle schooler's vocabulary of pop-culture references (including a cheeky nod to Disney's Moana). Completing tasks in and around a mystical volcano, learning hula, and entertaining a "mo'o," Anna races to pacify the goddess Pele and rescue her friend, and along the way centers herself inside her family's stories.

For those young readers interested in myth and still finding a sense of self, these two books will be both good entertainment and good examples. Let me know what you think of the books! Drop me a line @dorothy.megan and tag @atx\_family with your reading updates.

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