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TUNE IN



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

10 5 Things Women Really Want



Lylah, 5, is a Cover Kid Contest Winner. She's sparkle-loving, music-jamming, cheer-performing superstar, who dreams of becoming a veterinarian. Photo taken by Jordan Ashley Photography.



View the magazine online

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We are dedicated to serving the Greater Austin area by providing up-to-date 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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Editor's Note



CELESTE DIANNE WADE

Wade is a writer, public speaker, and a popular health coach in Austin. The eldest of seven children, she loves travel adventures with family.

Happy Mother's Day, Y'all!

I was born into my family as the fifth living generation of women. I grew up with motherly wisdom from Great-Great Grandma Annette, Great-Grandma Mary, Grandma Shirley, and my brilliant Mom, Gail. I was blessed to live near them and get to know them well until my Great-Great-Grandmother went to heaven when I was 10 years old.

I cherished being the eldest grandchild, who had the opportunity to name them and share the most memories with them. Each woman helped shape the person I am today.

I respect them for being strong, determined, and full of faith during profound challenges. All of them were widowed, divorced, or both. Many of

them had deep wounds from losing children. They all faced adversity, yet they overcame the struggles and succeeded.

During this season, when we celebrate mothers, I encourage you to celebrate the women who have impacted your life, the moms who birthed you, the moms who raised you, the stepmoms who chose you, the adopted moms who dreamed of you, and all of the women who care and continue to care for you as an adult. Motherly love is priceless.

Thank you, Mom!

Austin PBS

Family Fest

Hey Fam!

Join us for a FREE FAMILY EVENT with Austin PBS!

Saturday, June 7th 9AM – 12PM

Celebrate the 3rd annual Austin PBS Family Fest, packed with fun for everyone! Enjoy **live music by the Grammy Award winning Lucy Kalantari and the Jazz Cats, free breakfast, and a morning full of fun for the whole family**, including:

- Meet Lyla from the PBS KIDS show *Lyla in the Loop*
- Get creative with hands-on activities from *Lyla in the Loop* and *Molly of Denali*
- Discover summer safety tips and explore local activities from community partners
- Dive into engaging summer reading activities...and so much more!

RSVP Here!

English

Español

The Ready to Learn Initiative



Austin IN ACTION

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May Must Do's

May 3rd – May 4th

Pecan Street Spring Arts Festival

Source: www.pecanstreetfestival.org

May 11th

Mother's Day at The Capitol

Source: www.gov.texas.gov

May 26th

Memorial Day: Remember and Honor Event

Source: www.roundtherocktx.com



We're Looking for a Few Good Kids ... To Brag On!

Know a young person doing something good for the community?

Tell us about it! Send your

story and photo to:

editor2003@austinfamily.com

Central Texas Scouts Top the Nation in Popcorn Sales

Scouting America's Capitol Area Council has announced its top Scouts for the 2024–25 popcorn fundraiser, spotlighting two Central Texas youth who led local and national rankings.

Edward King, a freshman at Cedar Ridge High School and member of Troop 408 in Pflugerville, sold an impressive \$24,464 in popcorn products over seven weeks. His dedication — logging over 150 hours through online, wagon, and booth sales — earned him the top spot in Central Texas and ninth place nationally. King plans to use his earnings toward a trip to Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico this summer and the 2027 World Scout Jamboree in Gdansk, Poland.

In the Cub Scout division, 2nd grader Landon Edlin of Pack 912 in Hutto secured the top honor with \$14,567 in sales. Edlin, who attends school in Taylor, worked more than 35 hours and aims to use his popcorn proceeds to buy camping gear and a PlayStation 5 console.



Top 2024 Popcorn Winner Edward King.

The annual popcorn sale, runs August through November, helps fund local programs across 15 Central Texas counties. Scouts gain valuable experience in sales, public speaking, and goal setting, while 70% of proceeds stay in the community to support Scouting initiatives.

Shakespeare in the Park

Families looking for a unique night out under the stars can catch Austin Shakespeare's daring production of *Julius Caesar* at Zilker Hillside Theatre, May 15–25. This year's Free Shakespeare in the Park flips the script with most of the Roman conspirators portrayed by women—putting a bold spin on Shakespeare's classic tale of ambition and betrayal.

Celebrating 40 years of free performances, Austin Shakespeare invites parents and kids alike to experience live theater in one of the city's most iconic outdoor venues. Bring a blanket, pack a picnic, and enjoy an evening where poetry, politics, and performance collide.

With beautiful lighting, period costumes, and the open-air backdrop of Zilker Park, this *Julius Caesar* is both accessible and unforgettable. Whether you're introducing your kids to Shakespeare or revisiting a favorite, it's a powerful way to spend a spring evening.



Meta Enhances Parental Controls and Teen Protections in Texas

Meta's recent enhancements to its social media platforms offer significant benefits for Texas teens and their parents, aiming to foster safer online environments and provide greater parental oversight.

Enhanced Parental Controls

In compliance with Texas's Securing Children Online Through Parental Empowerment (SCOPE) Act, Meta has introduced features allowing parents to:

- **Monitor and Update Account Settings:** Parents can view and modify their teen's account configurations to ensure appropriate privacy and security measures are in place.
- **Set Usage Time Limits:** The ability to establish daily time restrictions helps manage screen time and promote healthy digital habits.
- **Approve App Downloads:** Parents have the authority to approve or block app installations, adding an extra layer of control over the content accessible to their teens.

- **Delete Accounts:** If necessary, parents can permanently remove their teen's Facebook or Instagram account, ensuring complete disengagement from the platforms.

Automatic Protections for Teens

Teens under 16 are automatically enrolled in Teen Accounts, which come with default settings designed to enhance safety:

- **Private Accounts:** Only approved followers can view and interact with a teen's content, reducing exposure to strangers.
- **Messaging Restrictions:** Teens can receive messages only from users they follow or are connected with, minimizing unsolicited contact.
- **Sensitive Content Filters:** The most restrictive settings limit exposure to potentially harmful or inappropriate content across the platforms.

Parental Involvement and Transparency

Meta's tools empower parents to be actively involved in their teen's online experience:

- **Activity Insights:** Parents can view their teen's interactions and time spent on the platforms, fostering open discussions about online activities.
- **Content Visibility:** Parents have the ability to see the topics their teen is interested in, ensuring age-appropriate content consumption.



Now Open for Voting

VOTE BY MAY 16TH AND MAKE SURE YOUR VOTE COUNTS

Go to www.austinfamily.com and cast your vote in more than 50 categories. Only one ballot per family. March 1 – May 16, 2025

By the numbers



27 years
Average age of first time mothers
Source: www.cdc.gov



May 9, 1914
Date Mother's Day Proclamation signed...
Source: www.archives.gov



39%
U.S. family households with kids under 18 years.
Source: www.census.gov



Painting by Alyssa Trevino from Pharr, Texas

Student Artists Shine in 2025 Texas Fish Art Contest

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has announced the winners of the 2025 Texas division of Wildlife Forever's Fish Art Contest, celebrating the artistic talent and conservation awareness of young Texans across the state.

The contest, hosted by the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center (TFFC) in Athens, received 485 entries from K-12 students. Judges selected 12 standout pieces to appear in the 2026 Texas Fish Art Calendar and to be showcased in a public exhibit at TFFC, which reopens July 1 after renovations.

The 2025 award went to Alyssa Trevino of Pharr, whose artwork was selected from entries statewide and will be spotlighted at the TFFC exhibit.

Austin Category Winners

Four age divisions were judged, and winners were selected for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in each:

Grades K-3

- 1st place: Jessica Ding, Austin
- 2nd place: Candice Chen, Austin

Grades 4-6

- 3rd place: Alice Xie, Austin

Grades 7-9

- 1st place: Rachel Shen, Austin
- 2nd place: Ziheng Wang, Austin

New Honors and Special Awards

Two new awards were introduced in the 2025 contest.

The Special Species Award highlighted the Guadalupe bass, Texas' official state fish. This year's award honored Shirley Watson and her third-grade class at Decatur Elementary, who successfully petitioned the state in 1989 to adopt the species as Texas' state fish.

The Mighty Minnow Award, introduced to celebrate kindergarten creativity in the K-3 category, went to Rishan Patri of Beaumont. The award recognizes age-appropriate artistic development and will also be highlighted in the TFFC showcase.



Painting by Rachel Shen. Grades 7-9. 1st place.



Painting by Jessica Ding. Grades K-3. 1st place.

Vote for your favorite places and things to do in Austin! Austin Family Magazine's **Readers' Poll Favorites** is open now through May 17th. Don't miss your chance to share your top pick. Vote today!

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Dad's Guide to Celebrating Mom and Stepmom

Family Matters



DR. BETTY RICHARDSON

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



Q My wife and I have a blended family. We each have kids from previous marriages and a child together. Our children range in age from 6 to 13. I want the children to do something special to honor my wife on Mother's Day. Mother's Day can be busy, stressful, and not very celebratory. Do you have any recommendations for ways dads can help kids honor moms and stepmoms?

A Based on your question, you have at least five children, and life is busy.

Each child wants and needs their share of your attention, so be careful to include each child equally in the preparations for this special day. Here are some suggestions for you:

1. Call a family meeting of all your children sometime before the special day. If you want the children's plans to be a surprise, tell them to keep the meeting and plans a secret. You could make the meeting attendance seem

important by giving each child a written invitation. Call this meeting something that reflects their last names, for example: the Jones-Smith family meeting.

2. Divide the children into two teams. Ask each team to create ideas for what they want to do to make the day special for mom.
3. Give each child a piece of paper to brainstorm ideas for what to do for their moms and stepmoms on Mother's Day. Ask the children to select the ideas they like best.
4. You could give the children chores to earn money so they can buy gifts, or it could be a gift from all the kids with everyone contributing.
5. Each of the children can make a Mother's Day card with the supplies you provide.
6. You may want the kids to make a meal for their mom or stepmom. It does not need to be breakfast, although it could be. With the children's input, create a menu.

Decide what each child will contribute. Some kids can help you shop for food. Other children can take on preparation chores. The kids can make placemats, napkin rings, and other decorations.

7. In meetings with the children, suggest the idea of entertainment. Ask if they want to do something entertaining like sing or perform a play.

Remember to nurture the relationships with each of your children by spending time one-on-one. Learn as much as you can over time about each child. Fostering strong relationships means they will want to work on projects with you. You are a good dad/stepdad to encourage the kids to work together to create a special day for their moms. Every day in your family can be special when you put in the effort to make it special.

VISITAR www.austinfamily.com
 Guía para papá para celebrar a mamá y madrastra

Best Summer Camp for Your Kid? Here's How to Pick!

Lifelines



TRACIE SEED

Seed is a native Texan, enjoys painting, sewing, building fairy houses, and spending time with her family and two fur babies.



Summer in Austin means Fredericksburg peaches, a plunge into Barton Springs and the annual search for the right summer camp. With dozens of options in Central Texas—ranging from traditional outdoor camps to niche experiences in robotics, music or horseback riding—finding the best fit for your child and your family can feel overwhelming.

But it doesn't have to be. With a little planning and thoughtful consideration, you can zero in on a program that matches your child's interests, developmental stage, and your family's budget and schedule.

Start With the Basics

Before browsing camp websites or talking to other parents, take a step back and define what you need. First, consider your summer budget. Camp tuition can vary widely depending on the type of program, length of stay, and whether meals, supplies or transportation are included. Day camps tend to be more affordable, while overnight camps come with additional costs like lodging, meals, and supervision.

Think about seasonal expenses like family vacations, part-time childcare,

and other activities when setting a comfortable range.

Next, assess what type of experience your child is ready for. Is your child a first-time camper? Younger children may do best in a half-day or full-day program where they can return home at night. Older kids or returning campers might be eager—and ready—for an overnight or multi-week camp.

Some Helpful Questions To Ask:

- What are my child's interests or curiosities?
- Do the camp's subjects and activities suit their age and developmental stage?
- What format makes the most sense: half-day, full-day, or overnight?
- How far am I willing to travel for drop-off or pickup?

Once you've answered these, you can start narrowing down your choices.

Day Camps: A Gentle Start

Day camps are ideal for younger kids or those not quite ready for an overnight experience. Whether half- or full-day, they offer structure, social engagement, and a fun way to try something new—all while allowing kids to sleep in their own beds at night.

Consider:

- Your family's transportation schedule
- Opportunities for making friends and building confidence
- A low-pressure way to explore new hobbies or skills

Overnight Camps: Building Independence

For older children who are emotionally ready to spend time away from home, overnight camps offer unique experiences. Campers gain independence, practice self-advocacy, and develop deeper peer relationships.

Consider:

- Duration: one week, several weeks, or a full summer
- Cabin life, supervision, and bunkmate arrangements
- Homesickness policies and communication options (email, letters, phone calls)

Traditional Camps: The Classic Summer

If you're after that classic camp vibe—think canoes, campfires, s'mores, singalongs and dirt under the fingernails—a traditional camp may be the perfect fit. These camps offer a variety of outdoor activities,

team-building games and life skills through nature-based experiences.

Consider:

- Access to outdoor recreation
- Unplugged time in nature, without screens
- Community-building and camp rituals like skit nights or group hikes

Art Camps: For the Creatives

Does your child love to draw, perform, or create? Art camps nurture creativity through visual arts, music, theater, dance, and more. Whether your child is a budding painter or aspiring actor, there's a program designed to help them grow.

Consider:

- Medium-specific focus (e.g. sculpture vs. dance) or multi-arts camps
- Supplies and materials—are they included?
- Instructor qualifications and experience in arts education

Sports Camps: For the Energetic

If your child thrives on activity and teamwork, a sports camp can be a great fit. These camps offer everything from beginner-level fun to advanced training for serious athletes.

Consider:

- The child's skill level and goals
- Focus: single-sport (e.g. soccer) or multi-sport camps
- Emphasis on teamwork, leadership and personal growth

Special Interest Camps: Dive Into a Passion

From magic and cooking to chess and coding, special interest camps allow kids to immerse themselves in something they love—or discover something new. These are ideal for children with focused interests or a desire to try something different.

Consider:

- Staff expertise in the subject area
- Hands-on, interactive learning
- A final showcase or event (e.g., performance, tasting, demo)

Academic Camps: Learning Made Fun

Academic camps mix learning with play. Whether your child is into STEM, robotics, writing, math or science, these camps make academics engaging and low-pressure.

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Consider:

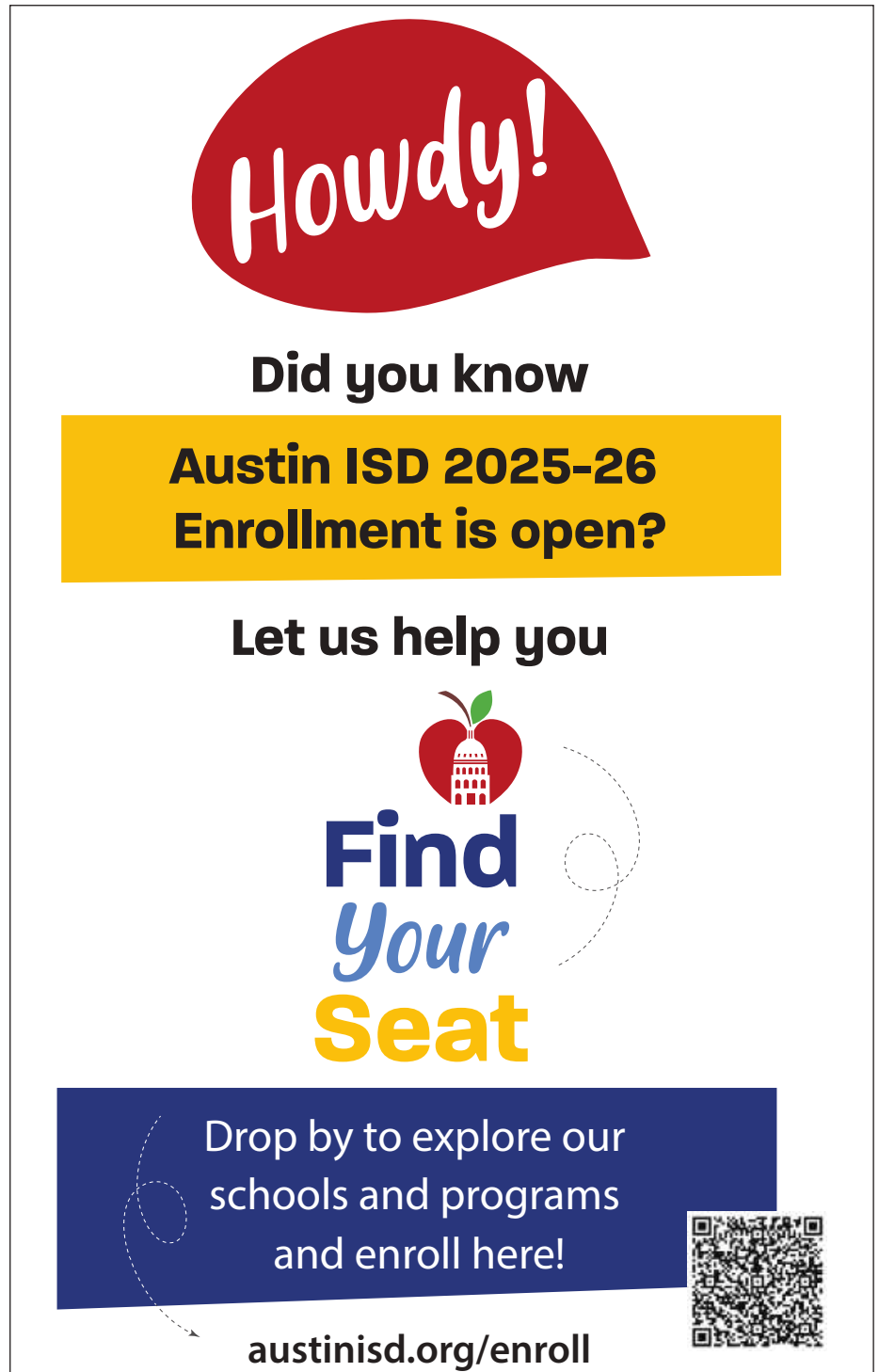
- Camp focus: reading/writing, coding, or general enrichment
- Availability of tech, labs, or group instruction
- Whether credit or enrichment certificates are provided

Final Tips

Before making your final choice, look for **parent reviews**, a solid camp **track record**, and **transparent policies** around safety, discipline, and

communication. Trustworthy programs will clearly outline expectations and provide open communication before and during the camp.

The right summer camp can do more than fill a few weeks—it can help your child grow, build friendships, and make memories they'll carry all year long. And the best ones? They send kids home tired, happy, and covered in glitter, grass stains, and stories they can't wait to tell.



The advertisement features a large red speech bubble at the top containing the word "Howdy!" in white, handwritten-style font. Below this, the text "Did you know" is centered in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A prominent yellow rectangular box contains the text "Austin ISD 2025-26 Enrollment is open?" in bold, black, sans-serif font. Underneath, the phrase "Let us help you" is centered in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The central graphic includes a red apple icon with a green leaf, where the apple's core is replaced by the white dome of the Texas State Capitol building. Below the apple, the words "Find Your Seat" are displayed in a large, stylized font: "Find" is in blue, "Your" is in a lighter blue script, and "Seat" is in yellow. A dark blue banner at the bottom contains the text "Drop by to explore our schools and programs and enroll here!" in white, sans-serif font. To the right of this banner is a QR code. At the bottom center, the website "austinisd.org/enroll" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A dashed white line with an arrow points from the QR code area towards the bottom left of the graphic.

5 Things Women Really Want

CATHERINE MICHALK

Michalk is a native Austinite, writer, and mom of three. You can follow her family's adventures at www.catherinemichalk.com.



Ads for Mother's Day gifts abound this time of year. Annual Mother's Day sales tout jewelry, spa gift sets, spring dresses, and bouquets. But what do moms want for Mother's Day? And more importantly, what can kids give their moms? After all, we know a 7-year-old isn't going out to buy a \$400 pair of diamond earrings. On the other hand, the Mom in your life probably doesn't want a picture frame made out of popsicle sticks; you can only have so many of those. But what would Mother's Day be without the kids showing their appreciation? What do moms want from their kids this Mother's Day? Here are a few suggestions from real Austin moms to get you started on your hunt for the perfect Mother's Day gift.

1. Moms Want Time

Even in the most equitable households, moms are relied upon to do and be everything. They are the lifeblood of the family, the ultimate multi-tasker. In fact, according to a Salary.com* survey, the average stay-at-home mom spends about 15 hours a day, 7 days a week managing her household. If the average stay-at-home mom received a salary commensurate

with what she does, she would be paid around \$184,820 per year. What do you give someone who spends so much time caring for others? The moms I interviewed said, "Time!" Time to sleep in, read a book without interruption, get a manicure, or go for a hike alone. We love our little ones dearly, but as any mom can tell you, the constant nature of the job can get overwhelming.

This Mother's Day think of a creative way to gift your mom time. Dads, if your kids are still little and can't manage gift-giving themselves, find time to take the kids out of the house or schedule a babysitter for a few hours so Mom can go out. Older kids can take more responsibility here. Try setting aside a specific amount of time on Mother's Day, say 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., called "don't bother Mom time" and make sure your kids know, if they need something to seek out Dad. If your kids want to get creative, they can make time-out passes for Mom. Take notecards and write "2 hours of alone time" on them, then let your kids color and decorate them. That way Mom can use her alone time when she feels she needs it most, not just on Mother's Day.

2. Moms Don't Want to Clean or Cook or Organize or...

Sometimes what moms want for Mother's Day is to do nothing. While this is similar to giving Mom time to herself, it goes a little further too. Oftentimes when moms get time to themselves, they walk right back into a messy house, dinner that needs to be made, and an overflowing laundry basket. Having alone time is nice, but stressful if you know you're just going to have more work. I can guarantee your Mom would love a day off, while still knowing all the chores are being done. Moms feel most appreciated when you recognize all the work she does day in and day out. By taking on some of that burden for her you not only give her a break, you let her know you see the hard work she puts in for the family.

3. Moms Want Something Personal

After "time," the most popular thing the moms I spoke to wanted was something personal. It doesn't have to be big, flashy, or expensive to be meaningful to her (although please remember the tip about no popsicle stick picture frames). Choose something that speaks to her uniqueness. A handmade bracelet with beads in her favorite



color, a candle in her favorite scent, or even a poem about her can be meaningful. It shows her you know what she likes, and are willing to put in time and effort to make her happy. If your kids are having trouble thinking of what Mom might like, ask them to write a list of the things she does that make her happy. Then, get creative. If she is a big reader, make her a homemade bookmark. If she loves to take baths, make her a bath bomb or jar of salt scrub. Take it from a mom who has received plenty of personal gifts handmade by my children: I cherish each gift. It will take more time than just ordering a generic gift from the internet or running over to Target, but I promise it will be worthwhile.

4. Sometimes Dad Needs to Step In

While we've been focusing on things your kids can easily give Mom without parental help, sometimes dad needs to step in. And no, we aren't talking about the gift from dad to mom. That should be something separate from the gift the kids give mom. Dad must help when kids are too young to manage a Mother's Day gift alone. Just because your baby is an infant doesn't mean you don't deserve a Mother's Day gift from them. Dads, take the lead here, and give Mom a gift card to a local spa "from" your little one. Make a card with your baby's handprint in place of their signature. Dads may even need to help teenagers find a great gift. Give them suggestions, take them shopping, and think about chipping in some money for the gift. Remind them to get creative and use some of the suggestions we laid out. This is also a great way to help your older kids with life skills like planning and budgeting.

5. Moms Want You to Ask

If you're still stumped about what to get Mom this year, we have a simple solution. Ask her. Perhaps she has been feeling overwhelmed with

cooking lately and wants a break. Check out options to have meals delivered, or if your kids are capable, put them in charge of Friday night dinners. Maybe the kids have been fighting more than usual, and Mom wants a quiet house. Have your kids call a truce for the day to give mom the peace she needs. Moms often put off their needs and their wants. However, chances are she has not announced what those needs and wants are. If you are not sure what she wants, take time to ask. You will both be glad you did.

This Mother's Day, we hope you find the perfect gift for your mom, whether it is something homemade and personal or simply the gift of time together. The great news is, you're in Austin. There are plenty of fun things to do and see with your mom indoors and outdoors. For more suggestions on fun things to do with your mom in Austin check out our website or look back at past issues.

*www.salary.com/articles/how-much-is-a-mom-really-worth-the-amount-may-surprise-you/

“If the average stay-at-home mom was paid a salary commensurate with what she does, she would be paid around \$184,820 per year!”

SUMMER CAMP GUIDE

CAMP	AGES	WEBSITE	PHONE	LOCATION
SUMMER CAMPS				
ARMSTRONG COMMUNITY MUSIC SCHOOL	3-10 yrs	www.acmsaustin.org	512-474-2331	W
ART CAMPS OF CORDOVAN ART SCHOOL	5-16 yrs	www.cordovanartschool.com	512-275-4040	NW/SW/CP/GT/RR-2
AUSTIN BAT CAVE SUMMER CAMP	8-17 yrs	www.austinbatcave.org/youth-camps		E
BADGERDOG CREATIVE WRITING CAMPS	9-18 yrs	www.austinlibrary.org/creative-writing-camps	512-542-0076	C
BRANDY PERRYMAN SHOOTING CAMP	8-17 yrs	www.bperrymanshootingcamp.com	830-625-9105	N/C/S/W-2/SW/CP/GT/RR-2
CAMP CHAMPIONS	6-17 yrs	www.campchampions.com	830-598-2571	Marble Falls, TX
CAMP DOUBLECREEK	4-14 yrs	www.campdoublecreek.com	512-255-3661	PF
CAMP HEART O' THE HILLS FOR GIRLS	6-16 yrs	www.hohcamp.com	830-238-4650	Hunt, TX
CAMP STEWART FOR BOYS	6-16 yrs	www.campstewart.com	830-238-4670	Hunt, TX
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CARPE DIEM SUMMER CAMP	5-12 yrs	www.carpediempreschool.com	512-229-0373	CP
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CONCORDIA TEXAS ARDUINO CODING CAMP	14-18 yrs	https://tinyurl.com/pxmzt8hs	512-313-4289	NW
COUNTRY HOME LEARNING CENTER	5-13 yrs	www.countryhomelearningcenter.com	512-288-8220	N/S
DANCE DISCOVERY	3-18 yrs	www.dancediscovery.com	512-419-7611	C/RR
ENDEAVOR SUMMER CAMP	5-10 yrs	www.endeavormontessori.com	512-572-0400	PF
FANTASTIC MAGIC CAMP	5-12 yrs	www.magiccamp.com	512-988-3045	C
IDEA LAB	5-13 yrs	www.austin.idealabkids.com	512-710-9654	N/C
JUMP! GYMNASTICS	3-10 yrs	www.jumpgymnastics.com	512-593-6226	N/C/S
KIDSACTING SUMMER CAMPS	4-18 yrs	www.kidsactingstudio.com	512-836-5437	16 Locations
MAD SCIENCE SUMMER CAMPS	4-12 yrs	www.madscience.org	512-892-1143	Multiple
MASTER GOHRING TAI CHI AND KUNG FU	4-Adult	www.mastergohring.com	512-879-7553	C
NEWK'S OUTBACK ADVENTURE CAMP	8-17 yrs	www.newkennis.com	830-625-9105	New Braunfels, TX
NITRO SWIM	Inf-Adult	www.nitroswim.com	512-259-7999	K/LT/NW
ORPHEUS ACADEMY	4-18 yrs	www.orpheusacademy.com/summercamps	512-231-8999	NW/CP
PARAGON PREP SUMMER CAMP	3-8th	www.paragonprep.org	512-459-5040	N
REDEEMER SUMMER CAMPS	4-8 yrs	www.redeemerschool.net	512-451-6478	N
SPICEWOOD COUNTRY CAMP	3 ½-10 ½ yrs	www.spicewoodcountry.com	512-346-2992	NW
STEPPING STONE SCHOOLS	5-11 yrs	www.stepsingstoneschool.com	512-459-0258	18 Locations
STICKY FINGERS COOKING SCHOOL	5-12 yrs	www.stickyfingerscooking.com	512-955-7550	N/C/NW/SW/GT/RR-2
SUGAR & SPICE RANCH CAMP	5 & up	www.texashorsecamps.com	830-460-8487	Bandera, TX
SYNERGY DANCE	3-18 yrs	www.synergysdancestudio.com	512-327-4130	W
TEX-ARTS	5-18 yrs	www.tex-arts.org	512-852-9079	LT
UNIVERSITY UNIONS AT UTEXAS ESPORTS SUMMER CAMP	10-16 yrs	www.universityunions.utexas.edu/university-texas-esports-summer-camp	512-232-2697	C
UT RADIO TV FILM	6-18 yrs	www.rtf.utexas.edu	512-471-6617	C

LOCATIONS
N, C, S, E, W, NW, SW
for Austin locations

BR for Burnet
CP for Cedar Park
GT for Georgetown

K for Kyle
L for Leander
LT for Lake Travis

PF for Pflugerville
OL for Online
RR for Round Rock

DAY CAMPS

ARMSTRONG COMMUNITY MUSIC SCHOOL	3-10 yrs	www.acmsaustin.org	512-474-2331	W
ART CAMPS OF CORDOVAN ART SCHOOL	5-16 yrs	www.cordovanartschool.com	512-275-4040	NW/SW/CP/GT/RR-2
AUSTIN BAT CAVE SUMMER CAMP	8-17 yrs	www.austinbatcave.org/youth-camps		E
BRANY PERRYMAN ESHOOTING CAMP	8-17 yrs	www.bperrymanshootingcamp.com	830-625-9105	N/C/S/W-2/SW/CP/GT/RR-2
CAMP DOUBLECREEK	4-14 yrs	www.campdoublecreek.com	512-255-3661	PF
CAMP SWITCH WILLO	6-13 yrs	www.switchwillo.com	512-920-0554	N
CARPE DIEM SUMMER CAMP	5-12 yrs	www.carpediempreschool.com	512-229-0373	CP
CODING WITH KIDS	5-18 yrs	www.codingwithkids.com		N/SW/OL/RR-4
CONCORDIA TEXAS MUSIC CAMP	14-17 yrs	https://tinyurl.com/pxmzt8hs	512-313-4289	NW
CONCORDIA TEXAS ARDUINO CODING CAMP	14-18 yrs	https://tinyurl.com/pxmzt8hs	512-313-4289	NW
COUNTRY HOME LEARNING CENTER	5-13 yrs	www.countryhomelearningcenter.com	512-288-8220	N/S
DANCE DISCOVERY	3-18 yrs	www.dancediscovery.com	512-419-7611	C/RR
ENDEAVOR SUMMER CAMP	5-10 yrs	www.endeavormontessori.com	512-572-0400	PF
FANTASTIC MAGIC CAMP	5-12 yrs	www.magiccamp.com	512-988-3045	C
IDEA LAB	5-13 yrs	www.austin.idealabkids.com	512-710-9654	N/C
JUMP! GYMNASTICS	3-10 yrs	www.jumpgymnastics.com	512-593-6226	N/C/S
KIDSACTING SUMMER CAMPS	4-18 yrs	www.kidsactingstudio.com	512-836-5437	16 Locations
MAD SCIENCE SUMMER CAMPS	4-12 yrs	www.madscience.org	512-892-1143	Multiple
MASTER GOHRING TAI CHI AND KUNG FU	4-18 yrs	www.mastergohring.com	512-879-7553	C
NITRO SWIM	Inf-Adult	www.nitrosim.com	512-259-7999	K/LT/NW
ORPHEUS ACADEMY	4-18 yrs	www.orpheusacademy.com/summercamps	512-231-8999	NW/CP
PARAGON PREP SUMMER CAMP	3-8th	www.paragonprep.org	512-459-5040	N
REDEEMER SUMMER CAMPS	4-8 yrs	www.redeemerschool.net	512-451-6478	N
SPICEWOOD COUNTRY CAMP	3 ½-10 ½ yrs	www.spicewoodcountry.com	512-346-2992	NW
STEPPING STONE SCHOOLS	5-11 yrs	www.steppingstoneschool.com	512-459-0258	18 Locations
SYNERGY DANCE	3-18 yrs	www.synergydancestudio.com	512-327-4130	W
TEX-ARTS	5-18 yrs	www.tex-arts.org	512-852-9079	LT
UNIVERSITY UNIONS AT UTEXAS ESPORTS SUMMER CAMP	10-16 yrs	www.universityunions.utexas.edu/university-texas-esports-summer-camp	512-232-2697	C
UT RADIO TV FILM	6-18 yrs	www.rtf.utexas.edu	512-471-6617	C

OVERNIGHT CAMPS

CAMP CHAMPIONS	6-17 yrs	www.campchampions.com	830-598-2571	Marble Falls, TX
CAMP HEART O' THE HILLS FOR GIRLS	6-16 yrs	www.hohcamp.com	830-238-4650	Hunt, TX
CAMP STEWART FOR BOYS	6-16 yrs	www.campstewart.com	830-238-4670	Hunt, TX
NEWK'S OUTBACK ADVENTURE CAMP	8-17 yrs	www.newkennis.com	830-625-9105	New Braunfels, TX
SUGAR & SPICE RANCH CAMP	5 & up	www.texas-horse-camps.com	830-460-8487	Bandera, TX

ACADEMIC CAMPS

AUSTIN BAT CAVE SUMMER CAMP	8-17 yrs	www.austinbatcave.org/youth-camps		E
BADGERDOG CREATIVE WRITING CAMPS	9-18 yrs	www.austinlibrary.org/creative-writing-camps	512-542-0076	C
CARPE DIEM SUMMER CAMP	5-12 yrs	www.carpediempreschool.com	512-229-0373	CP
CLUB SCIKIDZ	4-15 yrs	www.austin.clubscikidz.com	512-401-9369	C/S
CODING WITH KIDS	5-18 yrs	www.codingwithkids.com		N/SW/OL/RR-4
CONCORDIA TEXAS ARDUINO CODING CAMP	14-18 yrs	https://tinyurl.com/pxmzt8hs	512-313-4289	NW
COUNTRY HOME LEARNING CENTER	5-13 yrs	www.countryhomelearningcenter.com	512-288-8220	N/S
ENDEAVOR SUMMER CAMP	5-10 yrs	www.endeavormontessori.com	512-572-0400	PF
FANTASTIC MAGIC CAMP	5-12 yrs	www.magiccamp.com	512-988-3045	C
IDEA LAB	5-13 yrs	www.austin.idealabkids.com	512-710-9654	N/C
MAD SCIENCE SUMMER CAMPS	4-12 yrs	www.madscience.org	512-892-1143	Multiple
PARAGON PREP SUMMER CAMP	3-8th	www.paragonprep.org	512-459-5040	N
REDEEMER SUMMER CAMPS	4-8 yrs	www.redeemerschool.net	512-451-6478	N
SPICEWOOD COUNTRY CAMP	3 ½-10 ½ yrs	www.spicewoodcountry.com	512-346-2992	NW
STEPPING STONE SCHOOLS	5-11 yrs	www.steppingstoneschool.com	512-459-0258	17 Locations
UNIVERSITY UNIONS AT UTEXAS ESPORTS SUMMER CAMP	10-16 yrs	www.universityunions.utexas.edu/university-texas-esports-summer-camp	512-232-2697	C
UT RADIO TV FILM	6-18 yrs	www.rtf.utexas.edu	512-471-6617	C

CAMP	AGES	WEBSITE	PHONE	LOCATION
ART CAMPS				
ARMSTRONG COMMUNITY MUSIC SCHOOL	3-10 yrs	www.acmsaustin.org	512-474-2331	W
ART CAMPS OF CORDOVAN ART SCHOOL	5-16 yrs	www.cordovanartschool.com	512-275-4040	NW/SW/CP/GT/RR-2
CONCORDIA TEXAS MUSIC CAMP	14-17 yrs	https://tinyurl.com/pxmzt8hs	512-313-4289	NW
DANCE DISCOVERY	3-18 yrs	www.dancediscovery.com	512-419-7611	C/RR
FANTASTIC MAGIC CAMP	5-12 yrs	www.magiccamp.com	512-988-3045	C
KIDSACTING SUMMER CAMPS	4-18 yrs	www.kidsactingstudio.com	512-836-5437	16 Locations
ORPHEUS ACADEMY	4-18 yrs	www.orpheusacademy.com/summercamps	512-231-8999	NW/CP
STICKY FINGERS COOKING SCHOOL	5-12 yrs	www.stickyfingerscooking.com	512-955-7550	N/C/NW/SW/GT/RR-2
SYNERGY DANCE	3-18 yrs	www.synergycampstudio.com	512-327-4130	W
UT RADIO TV FILM	6-18 yrs	www.rtf.utexas.edu	512-471-6617	C

SPORT CAMPS

BRANDY PERRYMAN SHOOTING CAMP	8-17 yrs	www.bperrymanshootingcamp.com	830-625-9105	N/C/S/W-2/SW/CP/GT/RR-2
CAMP SWITCH WILLO	6-13 yrs	www.switchwillo.com	512-920-0554	N
JUMP! GYMNASTICS	3-10 yrs	www.jump-austin.com	512-705-9659	S/C
MASTER GOHRING TAI CHI AND KUNG FU	4-18 yrs	www.mastergohring.com	512-879-7553	C
NEWK'S OUTBACK ADVENTURE CAMP	8-17 yrs	www.newkennis.com	830-625-9105	New Braunfels, TX
NITRO SWIM	Inf-Adult	www.nitroswim.com	512-259-7999	K/LT/NW
SPICEWOOD COUNTRY CAMP	3 ½-10 ½ yrs	www.spicewoodcountry.com	512-346-2992	NW
STEPPING STONE SCHOOLS	5-11 yrs	www.steppingstoneschool.com	512-459-0258	17 Locations
SUGAR & SPICE RANCH CAMP	5 & up	www.texasHORSECAMPS.com	830-460-8487	Bandera, TX

TRADITIONAL CAMPS

CAMP CHAMPIONS	6-17 yrs	www.campchampions.com	830-598-2571	Marble Falls, TX
CAMP DOUBLECREEK	4-14 yrs	www.campdoublecreek.com	512-255-3661	PF
CAMP HEART O' THE HILLS FOR GIRLS	6-16 yrs	www.hohcamp.com	830-238-4650	Hunt, TX
CAMP STEWART FOR BOYS	6-16 yrs	www.campstewart.com	830-238-4670	Hunt, TX



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(Studio Closed June 23 - July 4)

<p>School Age 4-10yrs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May 27-30 Wicked June 2-6 Swiftie Summer June 16-20 Movie Mania July 7-11 Popstar Legends July 14-18 American Girl Doll July 21 - 25 Wicked July 28-1 Moana's Luau 	<p>Intensives Ages 7-18yrs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May 27-30 Stretch & Conditioning June 9-13 Ballet/Modern June 16-20 Broadway Bound June 23-27 Jazz/Hip Hop July 14-18 Ballet/Top/Jazz July 21-25 Contemporary/Modern July 28-1 Drill Team
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Treasure Island - 3 week play camp
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JUNE 9-13	Rockstar
JUNE 16-20	Space Odyssey
JUNE 23-27	Robots
JUNE 30 - JULY 3	Olympic Stars*
JULY 7-11	Undercover Agents
JULY 14-18	Rainforest Funfari
JULY 21-25	Jurassic Journey
JULY 28 - AUG 1	X Marks the Spot
AUGUST 4-8	Passport to Adventure
AUGUST 11-15	Mermaid Island

* Closed July 4

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Jump! North 2117 W Anderson Ln North@jump-austin.com	Jump! Domain 10910 Domain Dr #112 Domain@jump-austin.com	Jump! South 6800 West Gate Blvd #111 South@jump-austin.com
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- Mother & Daughter weekends
- Women-only weekends,
- Family weekends
- Summer camps

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May 2025 calendar

Go to www.austinfamily.com for expanded listings.

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

Fri 2

Dougherty Arts Center – Art in Cahoots Caregiver & Child Activity.

10 to 11 a.m. A pop-up arts experience for caregivers & children. Dougherty Arts Center, 1110 Barton Springs Rd. www.austintexas.gov.

Rock the Park Concert Series.

6:45 to 8:30 p.m. KUTX 98.9's Rock the Park returns to Mueller Lake Park this spring with free, family-friendly live music. Mueller Lake Park, 4550 Mueller Blvd. FREE. www.kutx.org.

Music in the Park. 7 p.m. Spend your Friday nights with us in Pflugger Park. Pflugger Park, 598 City Park Rd. FREE. www.parks.pflugervilletx.gov.

"Annie." 8 to 10:30 p.m. Holding onto hope when times are tough can take an awful lot of determination. Bass Concert Hall, 2350 Robert Dedman Dr. \$30. www.texasperformingarts.org.

Sat 3

Kyle Inclusive Bike Rodeo. 9 to 11 a.m. Gear up for a day of biking fun. Ages 4 to 15. 100 W. Center St. www.cityofkyle.com.

Taylor Fest. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. A vibrant celebration of culture. Historic Downtown Taylor. FREE. www.taylor.tx.gov.

19th Annual Pioneer Day. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dip candles, churn butter, make corn husk dolls and rag balls, and wander through reenactment camps and chuck wagon areas. Williamson Museum, 716 S. Austin Ave. FREE. www.williamsonmuseum.org.

"Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus." The Musical. 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Take flight on a hilarious adventure. The Kleberg at ZACH, 1421 W. Riverside Dr. \$22. www.zachtheatre.org.

Kite Festival. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Join Leander Parks & Recreation for the city's annual Kite Festival. Devine Lake Park, 1807 Waterfall Ave. FREE. www.leandertx.gov.

Pecan Street Festival. 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

The Pecan Street Festival is one of the largest, and longest-running, arts/crafts and music festivals in the nation. Hill Country Galleria, 12700 Hill Country Blvd. FREE. www.pecanstreetfestival.org.

CONTINUED: Annie, see Fri 2.

Sun 4

H-E-B 2025 Austin Sunshine Run. 8 to 10 a.m. Register for the 5K, 10K, Kids K, and Fastest Dog in Austin 5K. Auditorium Shores, 900 W. Riverside. \$4 – \$45. www.austinsunshinerun.com.

Día de las Madres Celebration. 2 to 5 p.m. Round Rock Ballet Folklorico presents arts and crafts for the kids, face-painting, food, and take pictures with Mom. Prete Main Street Plaza, 221 E. Main St. FREE. www.roundrocktexas.gov.

Hartman Foundation Concerts in the Park. 7:30 p.m. Austin Symphony Orchestra begins their annual spring concerts. Long Center, 701 W. Riverside Dr. www.thelongcenter.org.

CONTINUED: Annie, see Fri 2; Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus. The Musical, see Sat 3; Pecan Street Festival, see Sat 3.

Mon 5

Art in Cahoots Caregiver & Child Activity. 10 to 11 a.m. A pop-up arts experience. Hampton Branch at Oak Hill Library, 5125 Convict Hill Rd. FREE with online registration. www.austintexas.gov.

Un-Birthday Party. 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The Round Rock Parks and Recreation and Casey's Circle present the 7th annual UN-Birthday Party. Play for All Park, 151 North A.W. Grimes Blvd. www.roundrocktexas.gov.

Tue 6

After-School Dungeons & Dragons Club. 5 to 7 p.m. Roll the dice, go on heroic quests, outsmart monsters, and create unforgettable stories. Windsor Park Branch, 5833 Westminster Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Wed 7

Playdates in the Park. 10 a.m. Inclusive community events designed to activate families with young children. Brentwood Neighborhood Park, 6710 Arroyo Seca St. www.austintexas.gov.

Fri 9

2025 Party in your Park. 5 to 8 p.m. Four times each year, the party visits various neighborhood parks. Event locations vary in San Marcos. www.sanmarcostx.gov.

Sat 10

Donut Dash 5K. 7 a.m. Accept the ultimate donut challenge and join us for the 7th Annual Round Rock Donut Dash 5K. Downtown Round Rock, 221 E. Main St. www.roundrocktexas.gov.

Varta: A Storytelling Festival Celebrating South-Asia. 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. A storytelling festival inspired by South-Asia. Hampton Branch at Oak Hill Library, 5125 Convict Hill Rd. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Sábados en Familia. 12 to 2 p.m. A kids cultural arts and crafts program delivered by the Emma S. Milwood Branch, 12500 Amherst Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Mother's Day Gift Making Event. 1 to 3 p.m. Celebrate mothers with a fun and creative activity. Windsor Park Branch, 5833 Westminister Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Tea Party. 1 to 3 p.m. Wear your finest outfit for an afternoon of the tastiest tea and treats. Laura Bush Community Library, 9411 Bee Cave Rd. www.westbanklibrary.com.

Tween D&D at Spicewood Springs. 1 to 4 p.m. Do you long for adventure? Dungeon Masters lead short campaigns through lands unknown. Spicewood Springs Branch, 8637 Spicewood Springs Rd. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

"Moana" Make & Watch. 2 to 3:30 p.m. Watch Disney's Moana and get crafty with a Hawaiian paper lei-making activity. Cepeda Branch, 651 N. Pleasant Valley Rd. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Cedar Park Kite Festival. 3 to 7 p.m. Fly your kite at the 8th Annual Cedar Park Kite Festival. Lakeline Park, 1510 Alexis Dr. FREE. www.cedarparktexas.gov.

CONTINUED: Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus. The Musical, see Sat 3.

Sun 11

Family Day - Wild About Nature. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Discover the magic of the animal kingdom at UMLAUF Family Day: Wild About Nature. UMLAUF Sculpture Garden & Museum, 605 Azie Morton Rd. FREE. www.umlauptextexas.org.

Austin Symphonic Band: Mother's Day Concert. 7 to 8 p.m. Melodious Mother's Day concert. South Steps of the State Capitol, 1100 Congress Ave. FREE. www.austinsymphonicband.org.

CONTINUED: Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus. The Musical, see Sat 3; Hartman Foundation Concerts in the Park, see Sun 4.

Tue 13

Round Rock Express Game. 7:05 p.m. Gates open at 6 p.m. Family fun and themed nights all season. Dell Diamond, 3400 E. Palm Valley Blvd. www.milb.com.

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Wed 14

Homeschool Social Hour. 1 to 2 p.m. Windsor Park Branch invites all families who homeschool their children to a monthly social featuring games and hands-on activities. Windsor Park Branch, 5833 Westminster Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Little Builders. 2:45 to 3:30 p.m. For tiny engineers: a variety of blocks, building toys, and trains. Ages 1 to 5. Yarborough Branch, 2200 Hancock Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

CONTINUED: Round Rock Express Game, see Tue 13.

Thu 15

Bless the Badge. 7 to 8 a.m. Join us for our annual Bless the Badge event. Dell Diamond, 3400 E. Palm Valley Blvd. www.roundrocktexas.gov.

"Julius Caesar." 8 to 10:30 p.m. Austin Shakespeare is bringing a fierce and fearless production to Zilker Hillside Theatre this spring. Zilker Hillside Theater, 2206 William Barton Dr. FREE. www.broadwayworld.com.

CONTINUED: Round Rock Express Game, see Tue 13.

Fri 16

Bike to Work Day Fueling Stations. 7 to 9 a.m. Central Library, 710 W. César Chávez St. 1st Fl; Ruiz Branch, 1600 Grove Blvd., Cepeda Branch; 651 N. Pleasant Valley Rd., John Gillum Branch, 2505 Steck Ave.; Twin Oaks Branch, 1800 S. Fifth St.; Windsor Park Branch, 5833 Westminster Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Homeschool Social: AAPI Heritage.

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Join other homeschoolers for arts, crafts, games, and more. Pleasant Hill Branch, 211 E. William Cannon Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Moonlight Movie Night -

"Wicked." 7:30 to 10 p.m. Elphaba and Galinda become friends at Shiz University in the Land of Oz. Yonders Point, 3103 Aten Loop, Round Rock www.roundrocktexas.gov.

CONTINUED: Round Rock Express Game, see Tue 13; Julius Caesar, see Thu 15.

Sat 17

Pop Up Play Day Series. 9 to 11 a.m. "Pop Up Play Day" is popping into your community park to bring the party to you. Kinningham Park, 1000 Southcreek Dr. www.roundrocktexas.gov.

Round Rock Pop-Up Art Show. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Each show hosts a dozen different artists for a day of arts shopping. Downtown Prete Plaza, 5221 E. Main St. www.roundrocktexas.gov.

Renegade Revival Music Fest. 5:30 p.m. A variety of musicians from across Central Texas. 810 S. Austin Ave., Georgetown. www.georgetownpalacetheatre.thundertix.com.

CONTINUED: Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus. The Musical, see Sat 3; Round Rock Express Game, see Tue 13; Julius Caesar, see Thu 15.

Sun 18

CONTINUED: Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus! The Musical, see Sat 3; Hartman Foundation Concerts in the Park, see Sun 4; Round Rock Express Game, see Tue 13; Julius Caesar, see Thu 15.

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Wed 21

Lights, Camera, Action! Movie Night. 5 to 7:30 p.m. Monthly movie night. Snacks and refreshments provided. Hampton Branch at Oak Hill Library, 5125 Convict Hill Rd. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Thu 22

CONTINUED: Julius Caesar, see Thu 15.

Fri 23

Friday Fun Nights at Yonders Point: Pizza Party. 7:30 to 10 p.m. Get ready for a slice of fun at our Pizza Party. Kinningham Park, 1000 Southcreek Dr. www.roundrocktexas.gov.

CONTINUED: Julius Caesar, see Thu 15.

Sat 24

Science Exploration: Paper Helicopters. 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Bring your kids where they can dive into exciting hands-on activities. Laura Bush Community Library, 9411 Bee Cave Rd. www.westbanklibrary.com.

Indonesian Angklung and Dance Performance. 1 to 2 p.m. Indonesian cultural performance by Rumah Budaya Indonesia Di Austin. Pleasant Hill Branch, 211 E. William Cannon Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

CONTINUED: Julius Caesar, see Thu 15.

Sun 25

CONTINUED: Hartman Foundation Concerts in the Park, see Sun 4; Julius Caesar, see Thu 15.

Tue 27

CONTINUED: Round Rock Express Game, see Tue 13.

Wed 28

Yiddish Songs of Resistance. 7 to 8 p.m. Join us and celebrate the spirit of Yiddish resistance through klezmer music and Yiddish song. Terrazas Branch, 1105 E. César Chávez St. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

CONTINUED: Round Rock Express Game, see Tue 13.

Thu 29

CONTINUED: Round Rock Express Game, see Tue 13.

Fri 30

Homeschool Social: AAPI Heritage. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Join other homeschoolers for arts, crafts, games, and more. Pleasant Hill Branch, 211 E. William Cannon Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

CONTINUED: Round Rock Express Game, see Tue 13.

Sat 31

Ice Cream Social/Summer Kick Off. 1 to 3 p.m. Join your neighbors as we kick off summer with an ice cream social! We provide the ice cream and the toppings, you provide the community. Windsor Park Branch, 5833 Westminster Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Hawaiian Dance by Island Rhythms Hula Company. 2:30 to 3:15 p.m. An immersive cultural experience through traditional hula music, dance, and storytelling. Little Walnut Creek Branch, 835 W. Rundberg Ln. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

CONTINUED: Round Rock Express Game, see Tue 13.



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Protect Your Kids From Explicit Content

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.



My oldest daughter was exposed to pornography at the tender age of 9. She invited a friend over to play and, unbeknownst to me, the friend brought a phone with her. Thankfully, I went upstairs to check on them early on in the playdate, and I discovered that the friend had been viewing porn and was showing it to my daughter. We had several discussions to help my daughter understand what she had seen and try to undo some of the damage. My husband and I were upset with ourselves for our naivete - we thought we had at least a few more years ahead of us before possible porn exposure became something to put on our radars.

In the digital world, children and teens are so much more vulnerable to pornography exposure than we parents ever were as kids. The rising use of smartphones, social media, and online gaming has made it even easier for kids to stumble upon porn and even become addicted. Studies show that many children are first exposed to porn between ages 8 to 11, however, exposure can occur as early as age 6 or 7, especially in homes where devices

are not monitored. By the time children reach their teens, they are especially susceptible to both their curiosity and peer pressure in regards to porn. At these young ages, kids are being exposed to explicit material before they're even able to understand its implications.

Not only can viewing porn be confusing and unsettling, it begins to distort a child's perception of how healthy relationships and intimacy should look. As parents and caregivers, it is essential to educate ourselves about how porn is finding our kids, why it is a problem, and how to safeguard our children as much as possible.

Ways Porn is Finding Kids

Search engines. Even innocent searches can lead to explicit content if search engines are not adequately filtered.

Smartphones and tablets. Many kids who have access to smartphones and tablets also have easy access to the internet, where they can come across porn through web searches, social media apps, or file-sharing services.

Social media. Platforms like TikTok, Snapchat, and Instagram can expose kids to sexual content either through direct searches or through algorithms that recommend explicit content.

Online gaming. Many popular online games include chat functions, which can be used to send explicit content to other gamers. In addition, online games with open-world elements can also sometimes contain embedded adult content.

Friends. Just like in my daughter's case, many children are shown pornographic content by their peers who are looking to normalize their own experiences or to offload their feelings of discomfort by bringing friends into the experience.

Streaming platforms. Children who utilize streaming services such as YouTube are at increased risk of coming across explicit content, which is often listed or disguised as something age-appropriate.

Porn Addiction and Distorted Views

Kids are naturally curious about the world around them, and that includes

sex. Curiosity about sex is healthy, but when children access pornographic content to satisfy their curiosity, they are exposed to ideas and images about sex that they are not able to understand at such a young age.

A significant problem can arise when they repeatedly return to porn as a way to seek gratification. This form of gratification signals the brain to release dopamine, which gives your child a pleasurable sensation. Over time, as the brain becomes used to dopamine, it can require increasingly explicit material to achieve the same level of pleasure. This is how an addiction is formed.

In addition, most porn does not portray loving sex in the framework of a healthy, committed relationship. With repeated exposure to porn, kids begin to internalize what they see as what sex should look like and how they and others should be expected to perform, introducing unhealthy expectations and potentially dangerous behaviors.

Ways to Safeguard Our Kids

Parental controls. Take advantage of built-in parental controls on devices and internet services to filter out adult content.

Monitoring and tracking. It's easy to become complacent, but you need to be sure to monitor online activity regularly. Use software to track what websites your child visits. In addition, create a regular habit of looking through digital devices.

Talk, talk, talk! Make digital safety and the potential harm of pornography viewing a regular topic of conversation with your child, and be sure to keep the lines of communication open. Let them know that you are willing to honestly answer questions about sex, relationships, and porn so that they feel safe to come to you when they are curious or if they have seen something explicit.

Teach. Educate your child about the realities of porn, porn addiction, and how viewing porn can skew a person's concept of a healthy relationship. Teach them what healthy relationships and sex should look like and discuss the importance of consent and respect.

Keep it public. To make monitoring easier and access to porn more difficult, establish a house rule that devices that can access the internet are to be used in a shared space, like the family living room, and that phones are not allowed in bedrooms.

Digital advances have undoubtedly brought about many conveniences, but they have also exposed our kids to

risks we never anticipated. By educating ourselves about the dangers of porn exposure, monitoring and safeguarding our children's online activity, and encouraging open conversations, we can do our best to protect our children and ensure that they grow up with a healthier understanding of relationships and intimacy.



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Stitch a Smile: Crafting an Embroidered Flower Hoop for Mother's Day

Mix creativity, fine motor skills, and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) with this hands-on embroidery activity. For Mother's Day, design and stitch an embroidered flower using simple techniques that bring fabric to life. Explore patterns, textures, and design while creating a heartfelt, handmade gift.



Materials Needed:

- Embroidery floss (various colors)
- Embroidery hoop
- Embroidery needle
- Fabric
- Pencil or fabric marker
- Scissors

Step 1: Set Up Your Hoop

Choose your fabric and stretch it tightly in the embroidery hoop. Make sure the fabric is secure by tightening the screw at the top of the hoop. It will make stitching easier.

Step 2: Draw Your Design

Using a pencil or fabric marker, lightly sketch the outline of a flower onto your fabric. It will serve as a guide for your stitching.

Step 3: Thread Your Needle and Start Stitching

Cut a piece of embroidery floss (about 18 inches long) and thread it through your embroidery needle. Tie a small knot at the end to secure it. Start by making little stitches to outline the flower petals. If you want more color, fill the petals with even more stitches.

How to make a stitch: Start from the back of the fabric and push the needle up to the front. Pull the thread through until the knot at the end stops it. Decide where you want your stitch to end. Push the needle back down through the fabric and pull it through to the back.

Step 4: Add Details

Use different colors of floss to add details like the stem, leaves, and center of the flower and experiment with different stitches to add texture and dimension.

Step 5: Finish and Gift It

Once your flower is complete, trim any excess thread. Gift it to Mom with love.

Thinkery, a nonprofit and Austin's children's museum, brings joy to learning through play-based, STEAM exploration for children so they cultivate a lifelong love of learning and thrive. Learn more at www.thinkeryaustin.org.



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An Interview With Hillary Cumberworth



AF: Tell our Austin Family readers a little bit about yourself and your family.

I am what some people call an Austin unicorn. I was born at Seton Hospital, went through the Eanes school system, and worked summers at Sno-Beach! I majored in Fine Arts with a focus in sculpture at Southwestern University and married my college sweetheart, Jon, a few years after school. Jon and I eventually moved to San Antonio, followed by Houston, where I taught middle school art in the Fourth Ward. We then had an amazing opportunity to move to Dubai for Jon's job so, even though I was pregnant with our first child, we moved clear across the world to start our family.

The next four years brought us two more kids, then a new opportunity for Jon in Austin that brought us back home. After settling the family in, I dove headfirst into my art practice. I'm classically trained in oil painting and bronze casting but

have chosen to focus on ceramics. Now that my kids, Leighton, Corby, and Axel, are older, I can be found driving them to their many activities or teaching ceramics classes at The Contemporary Art School and Mud Studio.

AF: Who has been a role model for you as a mom and why?

This is a hard one for me because there have been so many wonderful women and mothers who have helped me along my journey in life. When I reflect on why they have all made an impact on me, there is a common thread - they loved me unconditionally and allowed me to grow.

AF: What are a few good things about raising kids in Austin?

There is always something to do with kids in Austin. The ability to expose our kids to so many different things in one place is very special.

AF: What is some of the best parenting advice you've received?

It is hard, and then it gets better. Kids can be hard, and then they get better. It always gets better! This parenting ride is cyclical, so hold on, take deep breaths, and enjoy the ride, because after the hard times, it will always get better!

AF: If you had known then what you know now, what would you have worried about less as a parent?

I'm a pretty easy-going, type B person so I don't sweat the small stuff. Things work out. Sometimes it's not how you envisioned or wanted it to be, but in the long run, it will be what is best for you or help you grow into who you were meant to be. We live in a highly competitive community. I constantly remind my kids that sports are supposed to be fun, friendships are not meant to be complicated, give your best at school, and there will always be a university that will be a good fit.

AF: What's one of the biggest challenges of parenting you didn't expect?

No one talks about the social politicking of parenting. Do you want to be on that sports team? Work your butt off and make it! If they didn't pick you because I don't hang out with them socially, then that wasn't a team for you in the first place. Be kind, be respectful, show people your pure intentions, and you will find the people you should be surrounded by in life.

AF: What do you love these days about being a mom?

This is going to sound crazy but having hard conversations! The more you normalize talking about challenging topics, the more they'll be receptive to listening, and the more likely they'll come to you when a problem comes their way.

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