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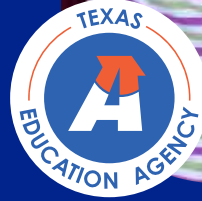
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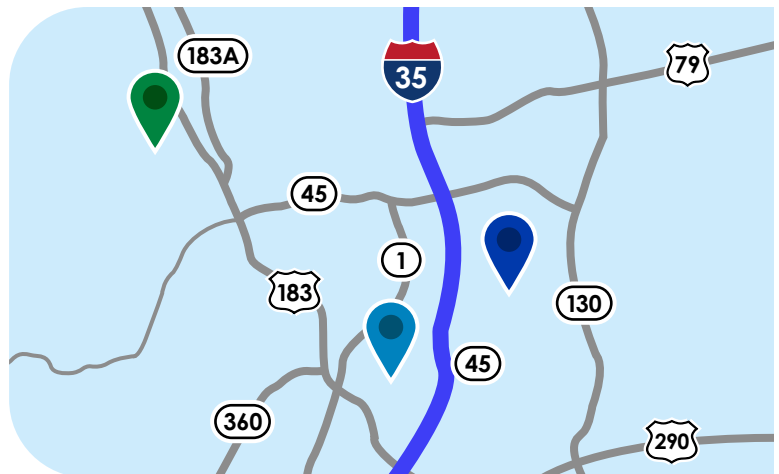
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TUNE IN



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

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Back-To-School Like a Boss



Madelyn, 7, loves swimming, dancing, animals, fashion, and learning new things. Her favorite story is about David and Goliath from the Bible because David is strong and brave, just like she is. 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.

As families across Austin gear up for another back-to-school season, the excitement of fresh notebooks, sharpened pencils, and new backpacks is often matched with the quiet worries we carry as parents. Will our children thrive in the classroom? Will they find good friends? These are questions that sit close to the heart—especially for parents of young children navigating school for the first time.

This year, the season also arrives with the memory of last month's devastating floods in the Texas Hill Country. Many of our readers have faced disruption, damage, and displacement. To those families, our hearts are with you. We hope this issue brings not only practical support but also comfort and community.

In this edition, we focus on helping children build friendships—because academic success is only one part of

the equation. Social connection is just as essential, and it starts early. You'll find expert-backed tips, relatable stories, and gentle reminders that even small steps—like a playdate or a new after-school activity—can make a big difference in a child's world.

We also highlight local resources for parents, including counselors, youth programs, and community groups offering support post-flood. As Austin continues to grow and change, one thing remains constant: the strength and resilience of our families.

Here's to a hopeful, connected, and safe start to the school year. We're in this together—and we're always here for you.

Warmly,

The advertisement features a vibrant yellow background with the PBS KIDS logo in the top left and the Austin PBS logo in the top right. The central text reads "Get Ready for Back to School with PBS KIDS" in a playful, colorful font. Below the text, there are several cartoon illustrations of diverse children engaged in various activities: one child is reading a book, another is playing with blocks, and a group of children is sitting around a table. At the bottom, there are two blue boxes with white text: "Stream Anytime!" and "Find videos, games, and more at pbskids.org". The pbskids.org URL is written in a large, bold, white font on a red background.

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Austin IN ACTION

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August Things to Do

August 8th–10th

Tax-Free Weekend

Source: www.texastaxholiday.org

August 19th

Austin ISD's First Day of School

Source: www.austinisd.org

August 30th

UT's First Football Game

Texas at Ohio State

Source: www.texaslonghorns.com



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From Our Family to Yours: Standing Together After the Flood

The Fourth of July is typically a time for joy in Central Texas—picnics, parades, fireworks, and family gatherings. But this year, the celebration was cut short by devastation. The severe flooding that tore through the Texas Hill Country in early July left families grieving, homes destroyed, and entire communities changed in a matter of hours.

At *Austin Family* magazine, our hearts are with every family who has been affected. To those who have lost loved ones, who are still waiting for answers, or who watched their homes and memories swept away—we grieve with you. Your heartbreak is shared by an entire region that stands ready to support and lift you in any way we can.

To the first responders who raced into danger to rescue neighbors and search for the missing—thank you. To the volunteers who filled sandbags, served meals, offered shelter, and donated supplies—thank you. To every single person who has shown up with compassion, strength, and resolve—you represent the very best of who we are as Texans.

The floodwaters may have receded, but the need has not. Families with young children are navigating emotional trauma, housing uncertainty, and profound grief. As parents, it's often difficult to know how to help our children make sense of such tragedy, especially when we ourselves are still reeling.

If you or someone you know is in need, the following trusted organizations are providing resources, care, and support for those impacted:

- **Austin Disaster Relief Network (ADRN):** Offering emergency housing, recovery resources, and emotional and spiritual care. Visit www.adrn.org or call 512-806-0800.
- **Central Texas Red Cross:** Providing shelter, supplies, and family reunification services. Visit www.redcross.org/local/texas/central-and-south-texas.html.
- **Integral Care:** Providing 24/7 mental health support, including crisis services for children and families. Call 512-472-HELP (4357).
- **Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS):** Offering disaster-related child safety information and family resources. Visit www.dfps.texas.gov.
- **SAFE Austin:** Supporting survivors of trauma, violence, and crisis. Call 512-267-SAFE (7233).

In the coming weeks, we'll be sharing additional tools and tips to help families talk to children about natural disasters, loss, and recovery. These conversations aren't easy, but they are essential. Children under 10 may not fully understand what's happening, but they sense when their world changes—and they look to us for stability, comfort, and hope.

To every family feeling the weight of this moment: we see you, we support you, and you are not alone. And to every neighbor who's stepped up to lend a hand, we thank you for being the light in a time of darkness.

With compassion as one Texas family,
The *Austin Family* Magazine Team

Sales Tax Holiday/Tax-Free Weekend

Texas Sales Tax Holiday: What Parents Need to Know

Texas families can save money this summer during the annual Sales Tax Holiday, taking place Friday, Aug. 8 through Sunday, Aug. 10. During this tax-free weekend, most clothing, footwear, school supplies, and backpacks priced under \$100 are exempt from state and local sales taxes.

Qualifying items can be purchased tax free in-store, online, by phone, mail, or custom order, as long as the sale occurs during the tax holiday. The Texas Comptroller encourages parents to support local businesses while making essential back-to-school purchases.

Purchases made using a business account may require an exemption certificate. For online orders, the transaction must be completed during the holiday. For example, an online school supply purchase made and paid for at 5 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 10 qualifies—even if the item ships later. However, if a payment fails and is resubmitted after the deadline, the purchase is taxable.

Keep in mind: shipping, delivery, or handling fees are included in the item's total price. If charges push the total above \$100, sales tax will apply to the entire amount.

For full item lists and rules, visit www.texasaxholiday.org. It's a great opportunity to stretch your back-to-school budget.

Austin Native Selected for Prestigious U.S.-Germany Exchange Program



Austin native Andrew Lucksinger has been selected to join the 2025–2026 Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX) for Young Professionals, a competitive program supported by the U.S. Department of State and the German Bundestag.

Lucksinger, who graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Reed College in 2025 with a degree in history and a minor in German, is one of just 65 Americans chosen from a pool of roughly 420 applicants nationwide. Raised in Austin, he has studied in both Portland and Berlin.

At Reed, Lucksinger focused his capstone research on West German student movements and postwar democratization. He also worked with the college's International Programs Office and volunteered with the American Center for Civic Education to promote global civic engagement among high school students.

The CBYX program, now in its 42nd year, sends young professionals to Germany for a year of language study, university coursework, and professional internships. Participants serve as citizen ambassadors, building cross-cultural understanding and long-term U.S.-German connections.

While Lucksinger participates abroad, a reciprocal group of German young professionals will live, study, and work in communities across the U.S., including Texas.

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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.



Starting kindergarten marks a major milestone in your child's life – and it can mark a major milestone in your life as well! The start of kindergarten will likely bring about feelings of excitement and anxiety as you and your child experience several firsts and learn to navigate a new environment and daily routine. Whether your child is your first to go to kindergarten or your last, each experience is different and can be somewhat overwhelming. To help everyone in the family feel a sense of control over these changes, it is helpful to understand what to expect and how to prepare and ultimately thrive during this time of transition.

What to Expect

Kindergarten is often the first extended, all-day separation between parent and child. It is a structured environment where your child will be expected to follow directions, sit still and listen, cooperate with his classmates, and do many tasks independently.

For parents, it can be an adjustment to adapt to a more rigid, required daily schedule and to hand over the care of their child to someone with less daily communication than they may have previously experienced. I remember feeling as though I had dropped my firstborn into a black hole. No longer was I walking her to the preschool classroom

door and having a quick chat with her teacher. I would have to wait until the end of that first long day to reassure myself that she was all right.

Preparing Your Child

Your child does not need to know everything before school begins, but you can help him start the year off with a boost of confidence by working on some basic skills in advance at home.

Academic Skills

- Recognizing uppercase and lowercase letters and numbers 1–10
- Writing their name
- Knowing basic shapes and colors
- Social and emotional skills:
- Sharing and taking turns
- Resolving disagreements appropriately
- Using words to express feelings
- Separating from caregivers for increasing amounts of time
- Sitting relatively still and listening in a group setting – library story times are a great place to practice
- Asking for help
- Treating materials with respect

Independence Skills

- Opening lunch containers and snack bags
- Using the bathroom without assistance

- Buttoning buttons, zipping jackets, and putting on shoes
- Cleaning up snack messes and activity supplies when finished

Be sure to participate in all of the before-school activities that are scheduled. Attend any orientation days that are offered so that your child can begin to feel comfortable with his new classroom, and you will be able to picture him in his new setting when he is away from you. Taking time to meet the teacher in advance will help your child begin building trust, which will make drop-off easier for everyone.

As the start of school approaches, gradually help your child transition to going to bed earlier, waking up on time, and eating breakfast at the right time for his new school schedule. A good rule of thumb is to move bedtime and wake-up time up by 15 minutes per day until you are at your goal schedule.

Talk openly about school with your child so that he will know what to expect, encourage him to ask questions, and share his feelings. Check out books from the library about kindergarten and snuggle up on the couch to read together. They can be great conversation starters about what to expect in the classroom and how your child might be feeling. Also, if possible,

set up playdates with friends who will attend kindergarten at the same school. Reconnecting with friends after the summer break can help your child start off school with the comfort of having a buddy in his classroom or on the playground.

Preparing Yourself Emotionally

Your child's entrance into kindergarten is a rite of passage for you as well. Parents often feel a range of emotions – sadness that the baby years are "over," worry that their child will be okay without them, excitement for more "me-time," and more. Emotions are normal and valid, so let yourself feel whatever you feel without judgment or comparison.

Logistically

Consider the necessary changes to your family's routine now that your child will be in school full-time and begin to establish the new routine in advance. You'll want to include the following in your planning:

- A morning schedule that allows enough time to avoid rushing
Tip: Set out clothes the night before.
- A meal plan for healthy breakfasts, lunches, and snacks
Tip: Pack snacks and lunch the night before.
- A visual chart to help your child follow the morning and after-school routine as independently as possible
- A designated "school area" for backpack, lunchbox, shoes, and other supplies to avoid a morning hunt

First Day(s)

On the first day of school, be sure to keep your goodbye short and upbeat and talk positively about the fun things your child will do. Lingering too long can increase your child's anxiety, but be sure to avoid sneaking away, which can also create stress. If the school allows, send your child with a small comfort item. Some kids cry for a few minutes but are fine once you leave. Your child's teacher is a pro at dealing with nervous children.

Kindergarten is exhausting for many children, so expect mood swings, fatigue, and sometimes meltdowns after school for up to the first month. Your child is learning to self-regulate all day and may "save" his feelings for home. Avoid scheduling too many activities during the first month, offer a healthy snack and a snuggle right after school, build in extra downtime, and keep bedtime consistent to help your child adjust to the new demands of his day.

It is common to experience some bumps in the first few weeks or months, so if your child regresses behaviorally, shows signs of school anxiety, or struggles socially, don't panic. Instead, reach out to your child's teacher and the school counselor for input and advice. That said, kindergarten should be a gentle, nurturing introduction to school. If something feels off or you notice signs like persistent school refusal, emotional withdrawal, sleep or appetite changes, or significant academic struggles, advocate for your child early.

Kindergarten is the beginning of a new chapter, and like all new beginnings, it comes with a 'learning curve' for both parents and kids. But it's also a chance to watch your child blossom, form new relationships, and learn more about his world. Be gentle with yourself and your child as you both navigate this new experience. Before you know it, you'll be proud of how much you both have grown.



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Hallway Hustle: 10 Tips for Class-Switching Success

Lifelines



TRACIE SEED

Seed has won numerous awards for writing, art, and design. She's the happiest while writing, sewing, painting, or spending time with family.



One of the biggest challenges for maturing students is navigating their first week of switching classes. Suddenly, they're no longer in one room with one teacher walking in line down the hallway. Now, it's bustling bodies, locker stops, different teachers, varying subjects, and a full backpack. Learning how to navigate changes, organize their day, and follow expectations is a life skill and part of growing up.

It's easy to feel overwhelmed by the impending pace, especially if it is a complete unknown. But with a little preparation and a whole lot of patience, parents can help ease that transition and instill confidence in their child to be ready for the first day.

1 Know the Schedule

Before school starts, sit down and go over your child's daily schedule. What does the day's schedule look like? What times do each class begin?

How long do they have between periods? Which rooms are far apart? Is there enough time for a quick locker stop? Help your student create a routine. It makes a difference when kids know what to expect and what comes next.

2 Walk the Halls

If the school offers an orientation or meet-the-teacher day, don't skip it. To build confidence, tour the campus and have your child practice the path throughout the day's schedule. To help keep your child on track to their destinations, take note of landmarks (the library, main office, water fountains).

3 Color-Code Materials

Use matching folders, notebooks, and binders per subject. Label each subject in big, bold letters. When the bell rings and it's time to grab-and-go, your child won't be fumbling through their locker or backpack. Their brain

will automatically reach for the red folder for science, the yellow one for math, or the blue one for history.

4 Build Time Awareness

Five minutes between classes feels fast—because it is. Help your child practice pacing and a routine. Set a timer and walk through mock transitions at home. Talk about what to do if they get lost on the first day (or week), or what the school rules are about bathroom breaks between periods. Being prepared with expectations is key to keeping jitters at a minimum.

5 Pack and Repack

Take a few trials packing and unpacking their backpack. If their class schedules change daily, practice laying out everything needed for each day, organized by class order. Discuss options about how to lighten the load by carrying only what's needed between classes. A heavy backpack

can make transitions feel way more stressful than they need to be.

6 Practice Locker Combinations

For kids with lockers, the combo lock is a rite of passage. Practice using a lock at home until muscle memory takes over. Talk about what should live in the locker, such as extra supplies, tissues, an extra water bottle, or even a quick snack. Discuss that keeping their locker clean and free of trash or unnecessary old assignments will be paramount for successful transitions.

7 Role Play Passing Periods

The hallway isn't just a path—it's a social scene that's not always easy to navigate. Check with your school's rules for passing periods. Some may allow students to have a quick chat at their lockers, but others may require them to walk directly to class. Knowing what's expected will help your child develop a clear understanding of

what is and isn't allowed, thereby reducing any anxiety caused by not understanding expectations.

8 Talk Through the "What ifs"

What if they walk into the wrong class? What if they forget a book? What if the hallway gets too crowded and they freeze up? Review different scenarios together and discuss how to handle them. Reassure them that everyone makes mistakes and that teachers and administrators are there to help.

9 Plan After-School Downtime

Switching gears six or seven times a day is exhausting. When your child gets home, or even in the car while driving to extracurriculars, give them some space to recharge. Maybe that's a snack and quiet time. Maybe it's sharing one high and one low from their day. To bond and develop emotional trust, share yours as well.

Provide them with a soft landing, whatever that looks like for them.

10 Check In

The first couple of weeks with a new routine can be a lot. Keep the conversation open with check-ins that don't feel like interrogations. Ask things like, "What part of the day feels the most rushed?" or "Which class do you look forward to?" Small, open-ended questions can give you insight into how they are doing and help them feel supported.

Switching class is more than just walking from one room to the next: it's a balancing act of organization, emotional regulation, and new responsibilities. But kids don't have to do it alone. With a little guidance—and a lot of grace—they'll find their rhythm.



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Back-To-School Like a Boss



CATHERINE MICHALK

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

It's that time of year again—when stores are stocked with backpacks, notebooks, and pencils, ready for parents and kids to descend. While you might still be in summer mode, don't forget that back-to-school shopping is a prime opportunity to teach your kids valuable life skills. From budgeting to understanding the difference between needs and wants, this season can offer more than just full shopping carts. Take time this year to involve your children in the process so they can help you win at back-to-school shopping—and learn something in the process.

BUDGETING 101

If your child is old enough to carry their own backpack, they're old enough to understand that you shouldn't spend more money than you have. This year, talk with your children about your back-to-school budget, and give them age-appropriate responsibilities to reinforce the lesson.

For younger elementary-age kids, have them help you keep a running tally of item prices—either on paper or in a note on your phone. Before heading to the checkout, total up the cost together and check whether you're within budget. If you're over, discuss which items could be removed or swapped for lower-cost alternatives. Be careful, though—if you're emphasizing the importance of sticking to a budget, make sure you lead by example. Don't overspend, even if your child pleads for something extra.

Middle school and high school students should already have some familiarity with basic budgeting. If not, this is the perfect time to start. Use the same approach as with younger kids, but take it a step further: give them a spending limit and let them do their shopping independently. You can wait in another part of the store or give them an hour to shop on their own. When they're done, meet up to review their purchases and see how

well they stuck to the budget. You may be surprised by how capable and independent teenagers can be when given responsibility.

Encouraging budgeting habits early helps kids understand money management, decision-making, and consequences—skills that will serve them well into adulthood.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL CLOTHING WITHOUT THE STRESS

Back-to-school shopping wouldn't be complete without new clothes and shoes. For many parents, this is the most dreaded part—especially when shopping with tweens or teens. What begins as a bonding opportunity can quickly devolve into frustration and fitting room meltdowns. So, how do you make clothing shopping less painful and more productive?

Here are a few tips:

- **Set expectations before you shop.** Don't enter a store without a list. Discuss what's truly needed, and agree to stick to it. If your child needs one new pair of sneakers, three pairs of shorts, and two shirts, make that clear upfront. Talking through expectations can prevent arguments and overspending later.
- **Make a deal with your teen.** If shopping isn't their idea of fun, incentivize the experience. Offer a small reward like an ice cream treat or extra gaming time if they cooperate and keep a good attitude. A little motivation can go a long way.
- **Let them choose one fun item.** School clothes—especially uniforms—can be boring. Allow your child to pick one item just for fun that reflects their personality. It might be a quirky pair of socks, a new hat, or a piece of jewelry. Giving them some freedom boosts their confidence and makes the trip more enjoyable.

Also, consider letting older teens take control of their clothing budget. Set a spending limit and allow them to shop solo, then review their choices. This empowers them to make decisions and learn from their spending habits.

TEACHING NEEDS VS. WANTS

Understanding the difference between needs and wants is an essential life skill—and back-to-school shopping is the perfect time to introduce or reinforce the concept.

Backpacks, shoes, folders, and notebooks come in basic forms, but often, kids gravitate toward trendier (and more expensive) options. This is where teaching moments arise.

Say your child needs new shoes. They want the same \$150 designer sneakers a friend has, but that price is out of your budget. Explain what you're willing to spend and why. Then, look at alternatives together. Discuss how the total budget covers many things—not just one item. Once your child sees the bigger picture, they may be more open to compromise.

Another great approach is to offer your child the opportunity to earn the difference. Maybe they can do chores, babysit or use saved allowance. Kids who contribute their own money to a purchase are more likely to appreciate it—and take better care of it.

Frame the conversation around priorities and trade-offs, rather than just saying no. This encourages critical thinking and teaches kids that choices have consequences.

PLANNING AHEAD PAYS OFF

As with any shopping trip, planning ahead can make all the difference in how smoothly it goes—and how much money you save.

Start by getting your child's official school supply list. Most schools publish these online or distribute them before classes start. Major retailers often post printed lists from local schools near their school-supply aisles.

Before shopping, take inventory at home. You might already have extra notebooks, pens, or glue sticks from last year. If your incoming kindergartner needs two glue sticks and you find one unused at home, cross it off the list. These small savings add up.

Don't assume your child needs a new backpack or lunchbox every year either.

Inspect last year's gear. If the backpack is in decent condition, clean it—many are machine washable. Toss it in on a delicate cycle and air dry for a refresh.

When it comes to timing, shop smart. If you dislike crowds, head to the store early in the morning on a weekday. Most people wait until the weekend or right before school starts, so shopping earlier means shorter lines and fuller shelves.

You can also avoid stores entirely. Many retailers offer online shopping and curbside pickup—ideal for busy parents or those who prefer convenience.

SHOP SMART AND SAVE

If you're looking to save, pay attention to sales, use store coupons, and shop during Tax-Free Weekend. In Texas, tax-free weekend runs from Aug. 8–10, during which you don't have to pay sales tax on qualifying items like school supplies, clothing and footwear. However, certain restrictions apply, so check the full list of exempt items on the Texas Comptroller's website before heading out.

Additionally, consider signing up for store loyalty programs or apps that offer extra discounts, cash-back deals, or exclusive member offers. Even small savings can make a big difference when buying for multiple children or shopping across several categories.

THE TAKEAWAY

Back-to-school shopping can feel overwhelming, especially with rising costs and busy schedules. But with a little preparation and a collaborative mindset, it doesn't have to be stressful—or expensive.

When you involve your kids in the process—by talking through a budget, giving them room to make choices, and using shopping as a chance to teach—you turn what might seem like a chore into a meaningful learning experience.

So this year, instead of dreading the trip, embrace it as an opportunity. Help your kids feel more responsible, more confident, and more prepared—not just for the school year ahead, but for life beyond the classroom.

2025-2026 EDUCATION GUIDE



PRIVATE SCHOOL

CATHEDRAL SCHOOL OF ST. MARY'S	PreK3-8th	DT Austin	512-476-1480	www.smcschoolaustin.org
CHALLENGER SCHOOL	PreK-8th	Avery Ranch	512-341-8000	www.challengerschool.com
	PreSch-K	Pond Springs	512-258-1299	www.challengerschool.com
	PreSch-K	Round Rock	512-255-8844	www.challengerschool.com
HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK-8th	North Austin	512-246-4455	www.holyfamilycs.org
KIRBY HALL SCHOOL	PreK4-8th	Central Austin	512-474-1770	www.kirbyhallschool.org
PARAGON PREP	PreK-8th	North Austin	512-459-5040	www.paragonprep.com
SAN JUAN DIEGO CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL	9-12th	South Austin	512-804-1935	www.sjdchs.org
SANTA CRUZ CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK-8th	Buda	512-312-2137	www.sccstx.org
ST. AUSTIN CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK3-8th	DT Austin	512-477-3751	www.staustinschool.org
ST. DOMINIC SAVIO CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL	9-12th	North Austin	512-388-8846	www.saviochs.org
ST. MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC ACADEMY	PreK-12th	West Austin	512-327-7755	www.smcprep.org
ST. HELEN CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK4-8th	Georgetown	512-869-3244	www.shcsllions.org
ST. IGNATIUS MARTYR CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK3-8th	South Austin	512-442-8547	www.school.st-ignatius.org
ST. LOUIS CATHOLIC SCHOOL	K-8th	North Austin	512-614-6622	www.slcsaustin.org
ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK3-12th	Taylor	512-352-2313	www.stmarystaylor.org
ST. THERESA'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK-8th	North Austin	512-451-7105	www.st-theresa.org
SUMMIT CHRISTIAN ACADEMY	PreK-12th	Cedar Park	512-250-1359	www.summiteagles.org

PUBLIC SCHOOL

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT	PreK3-12th	118 locations	512-414-1700	www.austinisd.org/schools
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CHARTER SCHOOL

BASIS AUSTIN	3rd-12th	North Austin	737-263-5890	www.basisedtx.com/austin
BASIS PFLUGERVILLE	3rd-12th	Pflugerville	737-263-5890	www.basisedtx.com/pflugerville
BASIS CEDAR PARK	3rd-12th	Cedar Park	737-263-5890	www.enrollbasistx.com/cedarpark

KINDERGARTEN/PREK MONTESSORI/DAY CARE

ABIDING LOVE LUTHERAN CHILDREN'S CENTER	South Austin	512-892-2777	www.allchildrenscenter.org
AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT	81 locations	512-414-1700	www.austinisd.org/schools
BRIGHT STAR	Cedar Park	512-842-6640	www.brightstaracademyschools.com
CARPE DIEM	Pflugerville	512-572-0400	www.endeavormontessori.com
CATHEDRAL SCHOOL OF ST. MARY'S	DT Austin	512-476-1480	www.smcschoolaustin.org
COUNTRY HOME LEARNING CENTER	North Austin South Austin	512-331-1441 512-288-8220	www.countryhomelearningcenter.com
DIDACTICA SPANISH IMMERSION PRESCHOOL	North Austin South Austin	512-284-9802 512-284-9802	www.didacticaspanshishschool.com
ENDEAVOR MONTESSORI	Leander	512-957-9159	www.endeavormontessori.com
EXTEND-A-CARE YMCA FOR KIDS	77 area campuses	512-472-9402	www.austinyxca.org/locations/extend-a-care
HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC SCHOOL	North Austin	512-246-4455	www.holyfamilycs.org
JUMP-N-LEARN PRESCHOOL	North Austin	512-593-6226	www.jumpgymnastics.com
KIRBY HALL SCHOOL	Central Austin	512-474-2770	www.kirbyhallschool.org
PARAGON PREP	North Austin	512-459-5040	www.paragonprep.com
SANTA CRUZ CATHOLIC SCHOOL	Buda	512-312-2137	www.sccstx.org
SPICEWOOD COUNTRY SCHOOL	North Austin	512-346-2992	www.spicewoodcountry.com
STEPPING STONE SCHOOLS	17 locations	512-459-0258	www.steppingstoneschool.com
ST. AUSTIN CATHOLIC SCHOOL	DT Austin	512-477-3751	www.staustinschool.org
ST. MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC ACADEMY	West Austin	512-327-7755	www.smcprep.org
ST. HELEN CATHOLIC SCHOOL	Georgetown	512-869-3244	www.shclsions.org
ST. IGNATIUS MARTYR CATHOLIC SCHOOL	South Austin	512-442-8547	www.school.st-ignatius.org
ST. LOUIS CATHOLIC SCHOOL	North Austin	512-614-6622	www.slcsaustin.org
ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL	Taylor	512-352-2313	www.stmarystaylor.org
ST. THERESA'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL	North Austin	512-451-7105	www.st-theresa.org
SUMMIT CHRISTIAN ACADEMY	Cedar Park	512-250-1369	www.summiteagles.org
WAYA PRESCHOOL	West Austin	512-473-2528	www.waya.org

AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES

ARMSTRONG COMMUNITY MUSIC SCHOOL	Westlake	512-474-2331	www.acmsaustin.org
AUSTIN CHAMBER MUSIC	North Austin	512-454-0026	www.austinchambermusic.org/education
AVERY RANCH DANCE AND MUSIC	North Austin	512-658-2996	www.austin-dance.org/avery-ranch
CORDOVAN ART	Round Rock & Georgetown Cedar Park NW Austin SW Austin Lago Vista	512-274-4040 512-284-9874 737-300-1200 512- 531-9353 512-963-6575	www.cordovanartschool.com
DANCE DISCOVERY	Central Austin	512-419-7611	www.austin-dance.org
HEARTSONG	North Austin	512-371-9506	www.heartsongmusic.net
JUMP GYMNASTICS	North Austin South Austin	512-593-6226	www.jump-austin.com
KIDSACTING	12 locations		www.kidsactingstudio.com
KLRU-PBS KIDS LEARNING	Virtual		www.klru.org/kids
MAD SCIENCE	Locations Austin & San Antonio	512-892-1143	www.austin.madscience.org
MASTER GOHRING TAI CHI AND KUNG FU	Central Austin	512-879-7553	www.mastergohring.com
NITRO SWIM	Cedar Park Bee Cave Kyle	512-259-7999 512-861-7946	www.nitroswim.com
RIO VISTA FARMS	Dripping Springs	512-829-4398	www.riovistafarm.net
STICKY FINGERS COOKING SCHOOL	In Area Schools		www.stickyfingerscooking.com
SWITCH WILLO STABLES	North Austin	512-920-2276	www.switchwillo.com
SYNERGY DANCE	Westlake	512-327-4130	www.synergystudio.com
TEXARTS	Lakeway	512-892-9079	www.tex-arts.com
TEXAS SCIENCE & NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM	UT Austin	512-471-1604	www.sciencemuseum.utexas.edu

Is Your Child Struggling Socially?

Family Matters



DR. BETTY RICHARDSON

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



Q Our 7-year-old daughter, Stacy, doesn't have any friends to play with—either at home or at school. At home, she plays alone with her dolls or on the computer. At school, she sits by herself during lunch and recess. What can her father and I do to help Stacy make a friend?

A You've asked an important question—one that many parents face. Fortunately, there are several practical steps you can take to help your daughter form connections and develop friendships.

1. Be kind and encouraging.

Create a warm, supportive environment at home that fosters confidence and self-expression. Research shows that authoritarian parenting can hinder a child's ability to develop healthy peer relationships. Encourage Stacy to speak up and interact with others in a positive way.

2. Teach social skills.

Show Stacy how to introduce herself and listen actively. You can role-play conversations and practice taking

turns, making eye contact, and asking questions. These simple social tools can go a long way in building friendships.

3. Talk about emotions.

Discuss how Stacy can cope with her own feelings and recognize emotions in others. Understanding both her moods and those of her peers will help her respond with empathy—an essential skill for building meaningful relationships.

4. Arrange playdates.

Invite another child of a similar age over for a short visit. Start with a low-pressure activity like baking cookies or doing a craft. If Stacy has treasured items she doesn't want to share, it's okay to put them away beforehand. If you don't know other parents with children, consider enrolling Stacy in group activities such as dance, karate, or Sunday school, where she can meet peers.

5. Collaborate with teachers.

Speak with Stacy's teacher to explore ways they can support her socially. For example, a teacher might pair her with a classmate on a project or encourage group work that promotes cooperation and interaction.

6. Explore the Buddy Bench idea.

Many schools have installed Buddy Benches—designated spots where students can sit if they're looking for someone to talk to or play with. Talk to Stacy about how these benches work, and help her prepare a proposal for her school principal if this is something the school doesn't yet offer.

Finally, don't underestimate the power of modeling. Let Stacy see you enjoying your own friendships. Host friends for dinner or outings, and if they have children, invite them along—it's a great way to give Stacy more opportunities to connect. Helping your child make friends takes time and patience, but with your support and encouragement, Stacy can develop the skills and confidence she needs to build lasting relationships.

VISITAR www.austinfamily.com
Tu hijo esta luchando socialmente?



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Austin Then *≡ and ≡* Now

Austin: Bat Capital of the U.S.

TRACIE SEED

Seed has won numerous awards for writing, art, and design. She is the happiest while writing, sewing, painting, or spending time with family.



Then

The 1980s brought more to Austin than big hair and shoulder pads. That decade marked the beginning of the state capital city's evolution into the Bat Capital of the U.S.

The transition began with the renovation of the Ann W. Richards Congress Avenue Bridge. During the project, engineers reinforced the structure with concrete beams, creating ideal nesting spots for migratory bats in the resulting cave-like crevices.

Soon after, thousands of Mexican free-tailed bats began swarming to the bridge in growing numbers, returning each spring from wintering in central Mexico. While the bats were cozy in their new home-away-from-home, many Austinites panicked, some petitioning to have their new nocturnal neighbors exterminated. The Austin American-Statesman's headline on Sept. 23, 1984, was "Bat Colonies Sink Teeth Into City," further fueling fear.

Swooping to the rescue was Dr. Merlin Tuttle, a scientist and bat enthusiast who founded Bat Conservation International. He moved to Austin in 1986 to educate residents and leaders about the pros of embracing its fang-bearing population, especially for their role in natural pest control and a healthy ecosystem. It's hard to turn away creatures that can eat an average of 150 tons of mosquitoes each week!

Thanks to Tuttle and local conservationists, by the 1990s, Austin's perspective had shifted from fear to fascination, and then, to a point of pride for the city.

Now

Today, the Ann W. Richards Congress Avenue Bridge is home to the largest urban bat colony not only in the nation but also in the world, with an estimated 1.5 million bats making this heart of downtown a home. And it's growing! This maternity colony consists primarily of female bats, which give birth, and raise an estimated 750,000 pups (baby bats) there annually. These bats can live up to 18 years.

From March through November, the bats take up seasonal residence, emerging nightly just at sunset in a breathtaking flash mob. Since it can take up to 45 minutes for the entire colony to leave the bridge, bats may emerge anytime between 7:30 and 9:45 p.m.

There are several spots to watch this nightly performance. The Congress Avenue Bridge east side walkway offers a direct view as the bats fly eastward over Lady Bird Lake. Other notable areas are the Austin American-Statesman's Bat Observation Area and the Butler Hike and Bike Trail, which provides multiple viewpoints along the lake, perfect for catching the twilight flight.

Bats have also become a significant economic contributor. It's estimated that bat tourism generates millions of dollars annually for the city. Hotels, restaurants, tour companies, and souvenir shops all benefit from visitors hoping to catch a glimpse of the famous swarm.

Austin now celebrates its bat residents with pride. Bat Fest, held each August, features live music, food vendors, and a whimsical bat costume contest. Far from the fear of decades past, today's Austin welcomes its weird, winged residents with open arms and eyes, full of excitement, fixed on the darkening sky.



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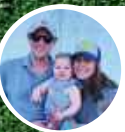
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REGISTER NOW



August 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 1

Touch-A-Truck. 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. Come enjoy a special kid-friendly morning. Take photos and connect with your community. 10737 E. Crystal Falls Pkwy. www.southstarbank.com.

Round Rock Express Baseball Game. 7:15 p.m. Take the family to watch the game, themed nights, fireworks, and more. Dell Diamond, 3400 E. Palm Valley Blvd. www.milb.com/round-rock.

School of Rock (2003) - Community Cinema + Austin Film Critics Association. 8 to 11 p.m. Grab chairs and a blanket, bring family and friends for a special screening. Community First, 9301 Hog Eye Rd. FREE. www.mlf.org.

Sat 2

Disney's Mary Poppins. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Join the magical nanny, Mary Poppins, in this delightful musical filled with unforgettable songs and enchanting choreography. McCullough Theatre, 2375 Robert Dedman Dr. \$23. www.texasperformingarts.org.

Kids Create: Sunflower Art for National Sunflower Day. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Join us for a self-directed, chalk project for National Sunflower Day. Ages 6-10. Central Library, 710 W. César Chávez St. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Y2K Summer Movie Nights. 8 to 10 p.m. Every Saturday, we're having Y2K Summer Movie Nights with classic movies at Red Bus Food Park, 801 Chestnut St. FREE. www.redbusfoodpark.com.

CONTINUED: **Round Rock Express Baseball Game**, see Fri 1.

Sun 3

Danny Go! 5 p.m. "Danny Go!" is a live-action educational children's show filled with music, movement, and silliness. Bass Concert Hall, 2350 Robert Dedman Dr. \$46 and up. www.texasperformingarts.org.

CONTINUED: **Round Rock Express Baseball Game**, see Fri 1.

Mon 4

Family Art Exploration @ Westbank. 1 to 3 p.m. Monthly fun, hands-on program where families can collaborate, create, and explore a new craft or art project. Westbank Community Library, 1309 Westbank Dr. www.westbanklibrary.com.

Tue 5

After-School Dungeons & Dragons Club. 4:30 to 7 p.m. Roll the dice, shape your story. Ready to go on heroic quests, outsmart monsters, and create unforgettable stories? Windsor Park Branch, 5833 Westminster Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Tiny Library. 6 to 8 p.m. Take a part of the library home with you after building a miniature bookshelf with all your favorite things. Ruiz Branch, 1600 Grove Blvd. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Pan Am Hillside Concert Series. 6 to 9 p.m. Oswaldo A.B. Cantu Pan Am Neighborhood Park, 2100 E. 3rd St. FREE. www.austintexas.gov.

Mushroom Clay Magnets. 6:30 to 8 p.m. Do you really love mushrooms? Make your own unique mushroom magnets using simple materials and clay mushrooms. Terrazas Branch, 1105 E. César Chávez St. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Wed 6

World Art Adventure. 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Flex your creative muscles, get inspired by artists from around the world, and make your own works of art. Howson Branch, 2500 Exposition Blvd. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Austin Symphony Presents: Tuneful Tales / La Orquesta Sinfónica de Austin presenta: Tuneful Tales.

1 to 2 p.m. Families can experience performing arts magic with several presentations in both English and Spanish. Terrazas Branch, 1105 E. César Chávez St. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Get Crafty: Friendship Bracelets.

2 to 3 p.m. Use elastic and beads of all shapes and colors to make a friendship bracelet. Ruiz Branch, 1600 Grove Blvd. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Mo Willems Party. 2 to 3 p.m. Celebrate all things Mo Willems with crafts, games, and a photo booth. Try to pin the nose on Piggie or walk around with a bird on your head. Central Library, 710 W. César Chávez St. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

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Minecraft Quest. 2 to 3 p.m. Welcome Minecraft Mob. Grab your trusty pickaxes, play our Quest, tackle Minecraft building and crafting challenges. St. John Branch, 7500 Blessing Ave. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Thu 7

Narwhal & Jelly Party. 10 to 11 a.m. Make narwhal horns, jellyfish suncatchers, and play Narwhal Unicorn of the Sea Ring Toss. Little Walnut Creek Branch, 835 W. Rundberg Ln. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Jungle Explorers. 2 to 3 p.m. Explore the rainforest with crafts and activities that bring the feel of the jungle to you. Ruiz Branch, 1600 Grove Blvd. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Art for Teens @ Westbank. 4 to 5:30 p.m. Teens and tweens, come get crafty after school. New projects monthly, and all materials will be provided. Westbank Community Library, 1309 Westbank Dr. www.westbanklibrary.com.

CONTINUED: **Disney's Mary Poppins**, see Sat 2; **Austin Symphony Presents: Tuneful Tales**, see Wed 6.

Fri 8

Busy Town: Tape City. 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Space is limited. Arrive early to get a ticket. Bring your toy car or borrow one of ours to drive our masking tape roads and railroads. Milwood Branch, 12500 Amherst Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Closing Weekend Foam Party. 2 to 4 p.m. Celebrate the end of summer with a foam party. We'll have music and bubbles in the backyard. Laura Bush Community Library, 9411 Bee Cave Rd. www.westbanklibrary.com.

2025 Party in Your Park. 5 to 8 p.m. Four times each year, we bring the party to you by visiting various neighborhood parks. Check the website for one near you. www.sanmarcos.gov.

August Movie in the Park. 6 p.m. Experience thrilling action and drama in the park, hosted by the City of Kyle Parks and Recreation Department.

Gregg Clarke Park, 1231-1301 W. Center St. www.cityofkyle.com.

Wicked Party. 6 to 8 p.m. Join us for a party of all things book, movie, and musical *Wicked*. Menchaca Road Branch, 5500 Menchaca Rd. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Paddington in Peru (2024). 8 to 11 p.m. Grab chairs and a blanket, bring family and friends, and enjoy a screening. Community Cinema, 9301 Hog Eye Rd. FREE. www.mlf.org.


CONTINUED: **Disney's Mary Poppins**, see Sat 2.

Sat 9

August Market Days – Back-To-School. 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Enjoy a beautiful Texas morning, stretch your legs, and support local vendors. Mary Kyle Hartson Park, 215 W. Center St. www.cityofkyle.com.

Kids Crafternoon: Back-To-School Perler Beads. 1 to 3 p.m. Join us for Perler bead fun. We'll craft Perler bead creations and turn them into locker magnets or backpack


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FALL PLAYS!
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keychains. Milwood Branch, 12500 Amherst Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Kids Create: Dungeons & Dragons Character Design. 1 to 3 p.m. Introduce kids to Dungeons and Dragons (D&D) by having them illustrate characters along with their character stats. Milwood Branch, 12500 Amherst Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

CONTINUED: **Disney's Mary Poppins**, see Sat 2.

Sun 10

Family Day: Starry Skies & Fireflies. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Unveil the secrets of the night sky. UMLAUF Sculpture Garden & Museum, 605 Azie Morton Rd. FREE. www.umlauptsculpture.app.neoncrm.com.

CONTINUED: **Disney's Mary Poppins**, see Sat 2.

Mon 11

Starting Preschool Party. 10 to 11:30 a.m. Is your little one starting preschool this year? Join us for a special preschooler party. Terrazas

Branch, 1105 E. César Chávez St. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Keep Austin Beautiful: Compost Critters. 2 to 3 p.m. Join us for a class on composting basics and a demonstration of a vermiculture system. Pleasant Hill Branch, 211 E. William Cannon Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Tue 12

CONTINUED: **Round Rock Express Baseball Game**, see Fri 1.

Wed 13

Homeschool Social Hour. 1 to 2 p.m. Monthly social with games and hands-on activities for homeschool families. Windsor Park Branch, 5833 Westminster Dr. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Back-To-School with Kona Ice. 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. After the first day of school, come cool off with tasty Kona Ice. Westbank Community Library, 1309 Westbank Dr. FREE. www.westbanklibrary.com.

CONTINUED: **Round Rock Express Baseball Game**, see Fri 1.

Thu 14

Movies in the Park - Deep Eddy Pool - Splash. 8 p.m. Join Austin Parks Foundation for a movie on the water. Moviegoers may enjoy the showing from the lawn or in the water. Deep Eddy Pool, 301 Deep Eddy Ave. www.facebook.com/austinparksfoundation.

CONTINUED: **Round Rock Express Baseball Game**, see Fri 1.

Fri 15

CONTINUED: **Round Rock Express Baseball Game**, see Fri 1.

Sat 16

Summer Sizzler - Austin. 7 to 10 a.m. Join us for the annual Summer Sizzler 5k/10k/15k. A summer event for the whole family. Marble Falls Mustang Stadium, 2101 Mustang Dr. \$15. www.findarace.com.

Public Tour + Sculpture Garden Storytime. 12 to 1 p.m. Join a docent for an entertaining tour through the garden while the kids join our team



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605 Azie Morton Rd.
www.umlaufsculpture.org.

Stuffed Animal Sleepover. 1 to 3 p.m.
Bring your favorite stuffed animal
to spend the night at the Central
Library. One stuffed animal per
family please. Central Library,
710 W. César Chávez St. FREE.
www.library.austintexas.gov.

Sun 17

CONTINUED: **Round Rock Express
Baseball Game**, see Fri 1.

Mon 18

**Generation Zero Summer Games
with Keep Austin Beautiful.** 12 to
1 p.m. Join us for an afternoon of
recycling-centric games. Windsor
Park Branch, 5833 Westminster Dr.
FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Wed 20

**Lights, Camera, Action! Movie Night
at Hampton Library.** 5 to 7:30 p.m.
Get ready for monthly movie nights.
Snacks and refreshments will be
provided. Hampton Branch at Oak

Hill, 5125 Convict Hill Rd. FREE.
www.library.austintexas.gov.

Sat 23

Austin Train Show. 10 a.m. to
5 p.m. Over 25,000 square feet of
railroading fun for the whole family.
Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton
Springs Rd. \$8 - \$10.
www.austrintrainshow.org.

Back-To-School Paint Party.

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. As summer comes to
a close, enjoy one last hurrah with
a painting extravaganza. Howson
Branch, 2500 Exposition Blvd. FREE.
www.library.austintexas.gov.

Sun 24

Kid's Maker's Market. 10 a.m.
to 12 p.m. A market for young
entrepreneurs 6 to 17-years-old
and future businesspeople. 10542
Menchaca Rd. www.hiveaustin.com.

CONTINUED: **Austin Train Show**, see
Sat 23.

Tue 26

CONTINUED: **Round Rock Express
Baseball Game**, see Fri 1.

Wed 27

Yo Gabba Gabba. 6 p.m. The
acclaimed children's franchise. Bass
Concert Hall, 2350 Robert Dedman
Dr. \$35.99 and up.
www.texasperformingarts.org.

CONTINUED: **Round Rock Express
Baseball Game**, see Fri 1.

Thu 28

CONTINUED: **Round Rock Express
Baseball Game**, see Fri 1.

Fri 29

CONTINUED: **Round Rock Express
Baseball Game**, see Fri 1.

Sat 30

CONTINUED: **Round Rock Express
Baseball Game**, see Fri 1.

Sun 31

CONTINUED: **Round Rock Express
Baseball Game**, see Fri 1.

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Preserving a Back-to-School Tradition

With the shift in classrooms away from hardcover textbooks to digital media, one of the most beloved back-to-school activities for kids and families is in danger of extinction: making and decorating homemade book covers.

Even if your young students are now learning from laptops and tablets, you can still share the fun of making your covers together by pulling a favorite book from the shelf.

Materials Needed:

- Paper grocery bag or wrapping paper • Pencil • Scissors
- Crayons • Markers • Stickers • Tape

Step 1: Choose your paper. Brown paper grocery bags are the gold standard for their durability, but any sturdy paper, such as wrapping paper, will suffice.

Step 2: Cut the paper. You can cut the bag along its seams or cut wrapping paper as you would for a gift.

Step 3: Measure your book. Place your book in the center of the paper. Draw a line with your pencil across the paper, where the top and bottom of the book are. Remove the book from the paper and fold the top and bottom at the pencil line. Place the book back on the paper and match the edges of the paper with the edges of the book.

Step 4: Cover the book. Fold the paper over the book so that the edges line up and the book is in the middle. Fold the ends back to where the ends of the book flaps are. Trim the excess paper so there are several inches of paper on the inside covers of the book. Place the flaps of the book inside the pockets that form on the inside of the paper. Depending on how snug the fit is, you may want to secure the flaps with tape.

Step 5: Decorate your book. Let your imagination run wild. Better still, once complete, you can sit with your child and enjoy reading together.

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