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kern county **Family** free z i n e

April 2022

Our Readers
Respond:
Great **LOCAL**
Services That
Parents Should
Know & Use

YOU CAN DO IT:

Easter
EGGS *to*
DYE For

SUMMER
CAMPS
FOR
ALL

Spring is here!

GO PLAY
OUTSIDE!

plus: jobs for teens: why fast food may be the way to go! pg 23

hello, happy mama: Lauren Skidmore pg 10 go barefoot more often pg 8



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4. Visit your dentist every six months or as recommended



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Public Health Services
DEPARTMENT

kernpublichealth.com

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MEMBERS OF



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You Can Do It!

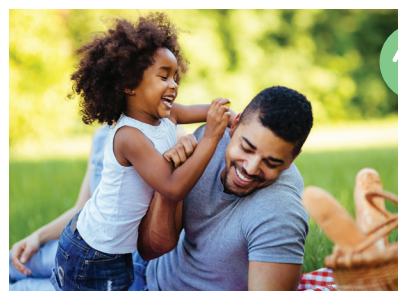
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Cover bunny Kennedy Scott, 3, of Bakersfield, photographed by Stacey Leigh Photography



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Dear KCFM Reader,

I have officially “retired” from my carpool duties, and I am actually quite sad about it. My youngest son just turned 16 years old and now has passed the driving requirements for a valid, California-issued driver’s license. I have loved carpool, and I’m not saying that in a sort of “I love carpool” sarcastic way, but in a true-blue I have really enjoyed it. Carpool is one of the best ways to get to know your kids’ friends and hear different perspectives about the day or activity from them. Especially with my boys, I always tried to have a few girls in the carpool because they usually tend to give me more details. Oh, the things I learned from them. I’m really going to miss all the carpool conversations and gab sessions.

Before he was legal to drive alone, I was driving my son and his friends around and I said I was going to miss all our talks in the car. He said not to worry that we’d still drive places together all the time. I love his heart, but I know from experience how much things change once teenagers get their freedom; you see them less and they have more independent lives. It’s such a bittersweet milestone, because it’s what you truly want for them, and yet it’s so hard to let go.

So now that he has his license, the next rite of passage is getting his first job. In the article, **“Part-Time Job for Teens: Encouraging Kids to Get a Job in Fast Food,”** on page 23, Cheryl Maguire encourages 16-year-olds entering the workforce to start in fast food. She says it’s a great place to learn all kinds of professional skills. This would be perfect for my son since he is a connoisseur of the Orange Chicken at Panda Express – now he could learn how to make it. His older brother’s first job was at Crumbl, where he baked many scrumptious cookies. Maguire says fast food experience teaches kids about multitasking, customer service, and many more skills that can translate to other industries.

In this month’s Humor at Home article, **“Dragon’s Shower: The Story of a Dragon in Costa Rica,”** Julie Willis writes about how she likes to tell fantastical stories to her children that start with the line, “Once there was a dragon named Dragon...” She makes it up on

the spot and usually ties it in to some kind of theme going on with her children. This time, she really improvises and the kids have a lot of questions. To read some of Dragon’s crazy adventures, turn to page 22.

April is the perfect month for outdoor activities before it gets too hot. In the article, **“11 Ways to Enjoy Outdoor Fun This Spring,”** Callie Collins writes her suggestions to make more out of this amazing weather. Some of her ideas include drawing with chalk, a picnic, playing with bubbles and so much more. For the complete list, turn to page 12.

If you’re looking for even more of what Bakersfield has to offer this Spring, KCFM asked its readers to give us more ideas. In the article, **“Readers Respond,”** on page 10, you can find all kinds of opportunities to keep your little ones happy this month and beyond. You’ll find information from everything from recreational sports to library activities.

Thanks to **Lauren Skidmore** for sharing her experiences with KCFM in the article, **“Hello, Happy (Empathetic) Mama,”** on page 14. Callie Collins writes about Lauren’s community involvement as CEO of Bakersfield Homeless Center and Alliance Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault. She is a fifth generation to live and work her family’s ranch by the Kern River. Take some time to read all about this amazing woman who is passionate about helping to improve life in Kern County.

As this perfect weather brings the world into bloom, take advantage of all that Bakersfield has to offer and enjoy nature to its fullest. Enjoy a nice, long drive with your little ones because before you know it, they will be driving you. It seems like just yesterday my little guy was strapped into his car seat. I am happy for every milestone; they just come too fast!



Happy Easter, and Happy Spring! Vaun Thygerson,
Contributing Writer

Goodbye Paper Checks,

Hello WIC Card!



Families can now get the new California WIC Card at their local Women, Infants and Children (WIC) office. Flexible shopping and easier checkout at the grocery store with the WIC Card!

YES!

Newly pregnant women, working families, including military and migrant families are encouraged to apply! WIC welcomes dads, grandparents, foster parents, or guardians who care for eligible children.



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WIC is a nutrition education program for Women, Infants and Children.

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- Referrals to healthcare and community services

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- Live in California
- A family of 4 earning up to \$4,086/mo

Due to COVID-19 all appointments will be completed by phone. Call to see if your family qualifies today!
Please call 661-862-5422

Clinica Sierra Vista WIC

Boys & Girls Clubs of Kern County to Hire Two No Kid Hungry Youth Ambassadors

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Kern County is recruiting to hire two No Kid Hungry Youth Ambassadors to work this summer on different projects revolving around childhood hunger. No child should grow up hungry in America, but 13 million kids, one in six children, struggle with hunger. By connecting kids in need with nutritious food, the No Kid Hungry campaign surrounds children with healthy food where they live, learn, and play.

Share Our Strength has created a program to involve college-aged Youth Ambassadors in the fight against childhood hunger by working with a No Kid Hungry community partner. Youth ambassadors do not have to be full-time but must be enrolled in an undergraduate program or technical school for Fall 2022. There is no age restriction to become a youth ambassador.

The Youth Ambassadors will be hired by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Kern County to work this summer (40 hours per week at \$15.00 per hour for ten weeks, including one week of paid vacation). The Youth Ambassadors will start work on June 6, 2022.

If interested, please apply at <https://www.nokidhungry.org/youth-ambassadors> by April 8, 2022.



Kern County Museum Launches New Mobile App

Kern County Museum has a new mobile app that contains exclusive histories and photographs of the 50-plus historic buildings located at its Pioneer Village. This app will enhance visitors' museum experience with extra information about the historic structures and exclusive photos from the museum's personal collection.

The app is available free on the Apple app store and the Google play store. For more information, please visit www.kerncountymuseum.org.

KHSD Journalism Day and Awards

Journalism students from across Kern High School District recently came together to hear from industry professionals for the annual Journalism Day event held at Career Technical Education Center (CTEC). Local television, print, and photojournalists were invited as guest speakers. Each professional shared their stories about how they became journalists, the schooling involved, the job challenges, some of their most memorable moments, and what day-to-day operations are like working in a newsroom. They also learned more about how journalism is changing with advances in technology.

The event concluded with awards given in print and broadcast categories. For winners list, go to kerncountyfamily.com!



Visit Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve this Spring

Each spring, the Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve comes alive with the seasonal surprises of the Mojave Desert Grassland habitat. The duration and intensity of colors and scents vary from year to year. The wildflower season generally lasts from as early as mid-February through May, with a variety of wildflowers creating a mosaic of color that changes daily.

Eight miles of trails through the gentle rolling hills, including a paved section for wheelchair access, make the park a wonderful place to hike and explore any season. Benches located along the trails make good places to sit quietly and watch for wildlife.

Before making the trip out to visit the poppies, you can check the park's camera live feed, please visit, <https://www.parks.ca.gov/live/poppyreserve>.

Kern County Awarded \$9 Million in Grant Funding for Parks Improvement

Kern County was recently awarded more than \$9 million in Clean California grant funding to renovate three of its county parks. The California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) developed the Clean California Local Grant Program to help communities beautify and improve local streets and roads, tribal lands, parks, pathways, and transit centers to clean and enhance public spaces.

More than \$4 million dollars (with no county match) was awarded to Heritage Park in East Bakersfield. More than \$3 million dollars (with no county match) was awarded to Mojave Park East. Finally, more than \$2 million dollars was awarded to Lost Hills Park, including \$400,000 of project costs committed by Wonderful.

Across all three of these park renovations, all improvements have specific elements designed to inspire families, youth, and seniors to improve their health and provide a safe, clean, and secure public setting for all users.

STUFF WE LOVE

APRIL

By Elena Epstein, Director of the National Parenting Product Awards

For more product reviews, visit nappaawards.com

Inklings Cards

An early-learning game that uses memory and math skills to help kids quickly identify and respond to numbers. Fun and easy to learn. \$24.99, ages 5+, inklingscards.com



Storypod



A child-directed and interactive audio system that ignites imagination through read-along books, music, podcasts, learning games and more. Loveable "Crafties" yarn audio characters add whimsy for hours of screen-free fun and learning. \$109.99, ages birth-10 years, storypod.com

Sharks Aliens Zombies

A classic card game with a twist. Think Rock Paper Scissors, but with a fun facts and wacky jokes. Great for family game night or when on the road. \$12.95, ages 6+, noveltieswholesaleinc.com



Techno Tiles

Gives kids creative freedom in building their own masterpieces they can play with. From rock-ets to castles, noveltieswholesaleinc.com



vehicles and abstract structures, imagination is limitless. \$19.99, ages 4-8, tlji.com



Tonka Steel Classics: Mighty Dump Truck

Your little one will enjoy playing with this truck for hours on end. This sturdy, steel construction vehicle is ready for the toughest loading jobs. \$24.99, ages 3+, amazon.com

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Articles by Nadia Morgan

April is Foot Health Awareness Month

Most people don't give their feet enough love. But foot health matters, and we can take care of the feet that carry us by considering going barefoot more often. According to healthline.com, some benefits of walking barefoot include:

- better control of your foot position when it strikes the ground
- improvements in balance, proprioception, and body awareness, which can help with pain relief
- better foot mechanics, which can lead to improved mechanics of the hips, knees, and core
- maintaining appropriate range of motion in your foot and ankle joints as well as adequate strength and stability within your muscles and ligaments
- relief from improperly fitting shoes, which may cause bunions, hammertoes, or other foot deformities
- stronger leg muscles, which support the lower back region



Plus, barefooting leads to grounding, the act of connecting your body to the earth, which has proven health benefits for lowering stress and anxiety. Healthline also confirms that while more research is needed on grounding, small studies have shown that connecting your bare feet to the earth (sand, grass, water, dirt) can help calm the nervous system, reduce fatigue, and lead to more energy throughout the day.

Are You Deficient in Magnesium?

Muscle cramps, muscle fatigue, headaches, anxiety, sleeplessness, and heart rhythm issues can all point to magnesium deficiency. The only way to know for sure is to get tested, but chances are, if you eat any processed food and experience stress of any kind, you need more magnesium. We can get more of it by eating foods such as spinach, beet greens, black and white beans, halibut, millet, tofu, seeds, and Swiss chard. Sometimes supplementation is in order, and the form that is easiest on the digestive system is magnesium glycinate. Taken before bedtime, magnesium can be a game-changer.

Plants For Health

Spring is here, and that means it's a great time to bring some new plants into the home. Plants can help filter VOCs (volatile organic compounds) like formaldehyde, benzene, ammonia, and toluene—which can cause serious health issues. Typical electrostatic air filters can't remove VOCs, but there's an aesthetically pleasing, natural, NASA-proven way to make your air cleaner and purer: houseplants.



The top species to keep your air clean and fresh include pothos, snake plants, spider plants (like the one shown), peace lily, and English ivy. Bring some spring inside your home and help your family breathe easier.

Helping Children Cope With Pandemic Stress

Parents are not the only ones suffering from pandemic-induced mental health effects. According to unicef.org, more than 1 in 7 adolescents aged 10–19 is estimated to live with a diagnosed mental disorder globally. As COVID-19 heads into its third year, the impact on children and young people's mental health must be addressed by schools and parents. The stigma surrounding mental health issues only furthers the problem, and society has a duty to help the next generation to process two years of grief, fear, and illness. After all, mental health is part of physical health.

If you are trying to help a child through anxiety, depression, or significant stress, one of the most helpful tactics they can learn is stress management. This may look like exercise, mindful breathing, guided meditation, or yoga. When you aren't sure what to do, a professional may be the right next step. Therapists can help a child or family learn how to cope in a world that is very different than it was two years ago. Early intervention is key to making sure your child has the best possible strategies to manage stress and mental health.



Apps For Guided Meditation

Want to relieve stress, lower blood pressure, and sleep better? There's an app for that! Actually, there are many apps for that—guided meditations are literally at your fingertips with a smartphone or tablet. Here are a few to consider:

Shine: This app is run by women of color and is full of meditations, sleep stories, relaxing music, and more.

Insight Timer: This has a giant library of free meditations, which you can filter by what you're looking for.

Ten Percent Happier: A difference here is that this app offers beginner guides for people who aren't sure about meditation.

No matter which app you choose, the benefits of guided meditation, mindful breathing, and taking time for yourself will pay dividends for your health.

Qualities That Help Nurses Thrive (Maybe You Have What It Takes?!)

Nursing is a challenging and rewarding field. Nurses are in high demand, and the COVID-19 pandemic has only highlighted just how vital these talented medical professionals are.

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing says nursing is the United States' largest health care profession, employing more than 3.8 million registered nurses. In 2018, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that registered nurse jobs are projected to grow by 15 percent between 2016 and 2026. The Canadian Institute for Health Information says that, as of 2019, there were 439,975 regulated nurses in Canada.

Many people interested in nursing careers may wonder if they have what it takes to be a nurse. Certain qualities can help nurses thrive in this challenging field.

Trustworthiness: For nearly two decades the American public has ranked nursing as its most trusted, admired and ethical profession, as indicated in Gallup polls. Nurses hold high ethical standards and 84 percent of respondents ranked nurses' honesty as "very high" or "high."

Empathy: Being able to feel what another person is experiencing from the patient's point of view is a skill nurses must hone. This may require nurses to put themselves in their patients' shoes and adapt care to make patients feel more comfortable and secure.

Emotional stability: Nurses often have to shelve their emotions so they can offer their patients the most effective care. Each day can bring powerful emotions. Nurses are not robots, but they have to perfect the balance of being empathetic while remaining strong in challenging situations. Accord-

ing to Daymar College, research has shown that nurses who are emotionally stable are more capable of solving problems and keeping their patients safe.

Effective communication: Great nurses are good communicators who can absorb information from their patients and communicate health care initiatives back succinctly. Nurses also must be able to effectively share information and care plans between doctors and other staff.

Problem-solving: Professional nurses see problems and find solutions. They know when certain situations may be challenging and seek the input of others to come to a satisfactory outcome.

Team player: Nurses need to work seamlessly with health care teams, patients, families, and all individuals involved in a health plan. This may require nurses to don many different hats while remaining flexible and being willing to adapt to changing situations on the fly.

Demand for nurses is surging and the profession can make for an exciting and rewarding career. Prospective nurses can take inventory of their personalities and skill sets to determine if nursing is the right fit.



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Many of our readers are raising young children. We are grateful for parents, grandparents, foster parents and so many other adults who care for Kern County's youngest learners. Our goal is always to help others find out about local resources. Recently, we asked our readers to share what other caregivers should know more about in Bakersfield and beyond.

Q. What local services should families with young children know about?

Families should look into Community Action Partnership. They offer education to children starting at the age of birth to 5 years old. It's a great service for parents.

- Andrea Padilla



Take advantage of lower cost city and county parks and recs sports to find what activities your little ones are interested in.

- Catherine Whorf



The Beale Memorial Library in the summer has free lunch for under 18 and an activity every day.

- Ariana Martin



Canyon Moms, a fun, friendly moms group designed to equip moms to be effective parents, at Canyon Hills Church.

- Jessica Champlin



All of the free things for kids! Story time at the Market Place each week, toddler time and preschool time at the library, Smitten Kids each month. We have a great community and many of my friends had no idea we had all of this regularly for our little ones.

-Mary Gonsalves



I think that a lot of parents are unaware of weekly toddler Tuesdays and reading groups for parents and family literacy that Bakersfield City School District offers through Zoom.

- Shawna Shelton

ONLY Call 911 During a Real EMERGENCY

Our healthcare and emergency response systems continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Kern continues to experience high volumes of 911 calls that are taxing our entire emergency response system.

WHEN SHOULD YOU GO TO URGENT CARE

- COVID testing
- Conditions that are not life or limb threatening, but require immediate care
- Sprains
- Sore throat
- Cough without severe shortness of breath
- Urinary tract infections
- Mild asthma
- Rash without fever
- Broken bones of the wrist, hand, ankle, or foot that have no obvious need to reset and have not broken the skin



WHEN SHOULD YOU GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM

- Broken bones and dislocated joints that need to be reset or have broken the skin
- Deep cuts that require stitches - especially in the face
- Head or eye injuries
- Severe flu or cold symptoms
- High fevers
- Fevers with rash
- Fevers in infants
- Fainting or loss of consciousness
- Severe pain, particularly in the abdomen or starting halfway down the back
- Bleeding that won't stop or a large open wound
- Vaginal bleeding with pregnancy
- Repeated vomiting
- Serious burns
- Seizures without a previous diagnosis of epilepsy

WHEN SHOULD YOU CALL 9-1-1



Any symptoms of a heart attack including

- chest pain
- pain in the left arm or the jaw
- sudden weakness or dizziness



Signs of stroke such as

- slurred speech
- severe headache
- weakness or numbness on one side of the face or body
- loss of consciousness
- difficulty breathing
- sudden change to mental state



- shortness of breath
- difficulty breathing



- Life or limb threatening injury

For any other health concerns contact your medical provider.



11 WAYS TO enjoy outdoor fun this spring

April is the perfect month to enjoy getting outdoors with children before the summer heat begins. Two observances with activities that often take place outside are Easter, on April 17, and Earth Day, on April 22. Nature-based play provides sunshine, exercise, physical coordination practice, and stimulation for children's five senses, in addition to giving children a break from screens and their usual indoor play habits.

Here are 11 ways to enjoy playing outside this season.

1. Host a picnic

Pack a basket, add a quilt, and make lunch happen outdoors. Add ice cream for short outings. Visit one of Kern County's newly renovated parks and make a memorable afternoon with lunch away from the kitchen.

2. Play ball

Take a ball, Frisbee, or other outdoor toys on your picnic or just outside to play. Tossing a ball around improves gross motor skills and is a fun way to exercise for all ages.

3. Add bubbles

Bubbles can add to any outdoor activity. They are an ideal Easter hunt prize because bubble solution won't hurt the Earth, plastic containers can be recycled and they are an item that can be spent rather than adding clutter. Teach children to take care of the community we share by picking up after themselves, with Earth Day and beyond in mind.

4. Try sidewalk chalk

Make memories by drawing with children. Encourage them to share cheerful messages on your driveway or sidewalk. Show them how to draw hopscotch and play games you enjoyed as a child.

5. Splash in mud

The sensory experience of finding earthworms, playing in mud, and making mud pies is something lacking in many individual childhood experiences. Create opportunities for play in outdoor spaces, even if it's messy.

6. Plant flowers together

Teach the basics of plant care and give children something to look forward to by planting seeds. Learn about what makes them thrive.



7. Look for rocks, bugs, and blossoms

Try looking for one object that follows each color of the rainbow. Teach children to observe insects without hurting them, see flowers without having to pick them, and look at rocks but leave them in their place.

8. Attend an Easter egg hunt

Check out our community calendar for local Easter egg hunts or plan your own.

9. Learn about Passover

Passover begins April 15. Learn about the bitter herbs used in Passover traditions and where to find them, from farmers' market to garden boxes. And try our recipe for homemade charoset in You Can Do It on page 23!

10. Ride a bike

Teach those early skills, from tricycles to bicycles. Whether your child's choice is a bike or a scooter, invest in a good helmet.

11. Explore nearby

So much of parenting involves a steady routine. Take time to get outside and see your neighborhood or town in walkable ways.

"Of all the paths you take in life, make sure a few of them are dirt."

- John Muir, botanist, mountaineer, philosopher

GET YOUR TAXES COMPLETED AND FILED FOR FREE!



RECURRING SITES

- United Way of Kern County
- South, East, & Foothill High School
- Strata Credit Union
- Greenfield, Arvin, & Lost Hills Family Resource Center
- UEI College
- Child Support Services
- Ridgecrest Women's Center
- St. John Baptist Missionary Church
- Vineland School District

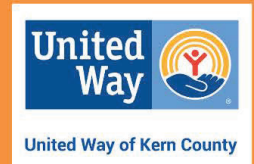
ONE DAY SITES

- Delano Adventist Health (February 26th)
- Casa Amelia Cadena Apartments - Shafter (March 11th)
- Boys & Girls Club of Bakersfield (March 19th)
- Govea Gardens Apartments (April 1st)
- David Head Community Center (April 2nd)



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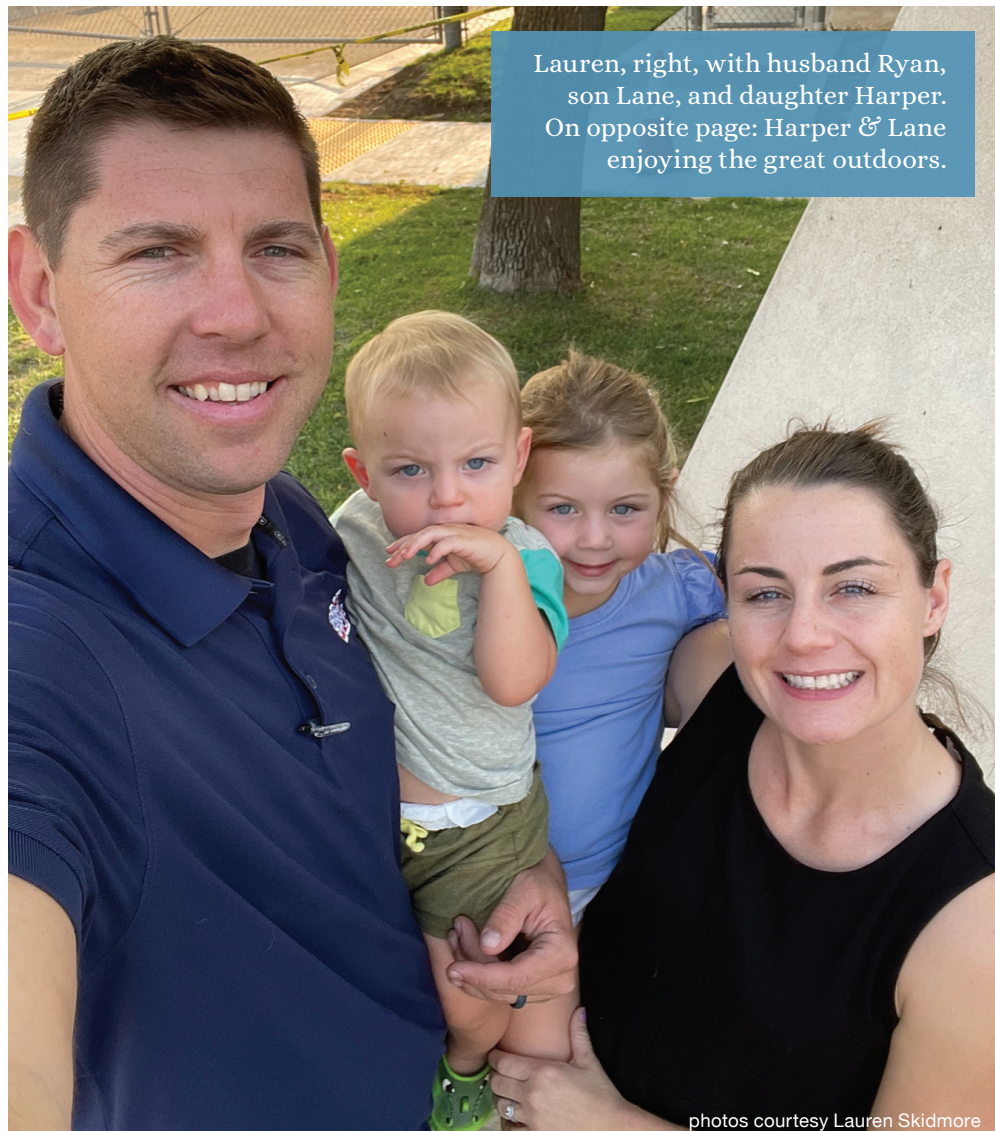
empathetic Hello, Happy Mama: CEO, Rancher & Mom **Lauren Skidmore**

Born and raised in Kern County, Lauren Skidmore knows the community inside and out, the public and private aspects of working and living here. Lauren is the fifth generation to call her family's ranch "home", a working cow/calf operation by the Kern River they are proud to trace back to the early 1900's. Her dad runs the ranch while she and her husband both work full-time jobs and raise their children on the family property, with weekends full of chores around the ranch for everyone.

Lauren is CEO of two incredible organizations, Bakersfield Homeless Center and Alliance Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault. She describes herself as having a heart for helping and supporting other moms. The mission of Bakersfield Homeless Center is "to provide support and resources to families and individuals in crisis while helping them to achieve their highest level of self-sufficiency." Alliance Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault helps survivors, who often have young children, access services that also prepare them to move forward by meeting their needs and preparing them for independent living.

"As CEO, I get to be the visionary. I am not the one doing direct client service. I have an amazing team. My work is to be the one problem-solving to create a better agency. My team will do case management with therapists. We guide families through a really tough time," said Lauren.

Between the two agencies, Lauren works with around 230 employees, including those former clients who go through programs designed for



photos courtesy Lauren Skidmore

Hello,
Happy Mama!
ENTER TO WIN
a free paint party
studio session at
Best Music and Arts
for up to 10 artists.

(\$275 value) See full details on entry page.

Enter by 11:59pm on April 25th at

https://bit.ly/April_happymama

upward mobility, which she estimates to be about 90 individuals at any given time. Those skills often translate to employment for upward mobility, a means to an end for those in need.

"We share partnerships and work with our team for the good of the community. The goal for both agencies is to provide support and guidance, to help those we serve create an independent future with a path to self-sufficiency," said Lauren. "Our job is often to help those in need to see a path for themselves. We provide them the support they need to be self-sufficient."

Lauren sees firsthand the reality of life for so

many people who find themselves in unexpected circumstances. The assumption that people have made poor choices to somehow deserve their situation or otherwise experience poverty, abuse, or homelessness nettles her.

"There is absolutely a misperception that clients who experience homelessness, or even sexual assault, had a choice in their situation or scenario, and that is not always the case," she explained. "It could be a whole range of misfortune that puts them at a tremendous disadvantage. For example, a home where they were living never officially got passed down to them, maybe someone lost their job or their significant other removed them from

the home. Medical bills or other bills have built over time in some cases and they can no longer handle that financial pressure. Their car is irreparable, so they can't get to work, and loss of a job leads to loss of a home. They don't always see it coming or even imagine they'd be on the receiving end of services. It is sometimes a whole host of unfortunate events."

Lauren formerly served as district director for Assembly member Vince Fong. Her business degree is from California State University, Fresno and she completed her master's in community development at Kansas State University.

When she's not overseeing outreach services, Lauren can be found at home with her husband, Ryan, a police officer, their daughter, Harper, age 4, and son, Lane, 2. Being a parent with young children throughout the pandemic has been challenging, she admits, but her gratitude for family support stands out.

"A lot of people have asked me how I have the energy to work in such a demanding job but also be a hands-on mom and continue to be involved with our family's ranch. You just do it. You adjust and adapt," said Lauren. "I'm the morning person and my husband is the night person. We coordinate and do our best to both be present after work and on weekends. His schedule is crazy but we try to support one another."

Four key questions with Lauren Skidmore

Q. We often talk with mothers in phases of life that can seem lonely or isolating, especially as they raise young children. What advice do you have for respite and renewal for women going through that phase of life?

Having children was the most life-altering experience for me. It was really hard to go through that shock to the system and deal with postpartum issues. Those issues can feel like something we don't talk about and this life phase isn't something we can complain about. I want to encourage other women to talk about the good days and the hard days and find other moms to connect, complain, and celebrate with.

Also, talk about what you're feeling with your significant other. That's really important. They need to be able to step in. When you're at your breaking point, take a break, take an epsom salt bath and

know that we can't do it all - all the time. Whatever we choose to do at that moment is enough for our children. It is enough. We are enough.

Q. Do you have any hidden talents?

I can text with my eyes closed. I work cattle. I've given injections to cows and I don't mind working outside, getting dirty, and being in nature because of the ranch component.

Q. What should families in the Kern County area know more about in their community?

We have an amazing community of families. We have backyards and lots of space and getting out in nature is an important aspect of family life. Take your family to go hike at Wind Wolves, enjoy the outdoors along the grapevine, enjoy Tehachapi's snow if it snows, and utilize our different scenic areas to get out and about. Social relationships



are important, too. There are tons of other moms throughout Kern County as part of our community, so create your own network if you don't have one. Don't wait for the school age connection to happen. Find other women to go and grab coffee or read a book with nearby.

Q. If you could share a public service announcement message with the parenting community, what would it be?

All moms are struggling, no matter how they seem. Take time to check on them.

Fun fill-ins with Lauren:

I'm always laughing at...

My attempt at dressing trendy; sometimes, I try to dress like what I see on Facebook or Instagram and I'm not great at it.

The first thing I do when I wake up in the morning is...

Drink water and enjoy the silence.

Today, the strangest thing in my purse is...

Yesterday, it was a half-eaten sandwich. Today, I don't have anything that smelly: a cutlery bag with napkin, fork and spoon.

My favorite food is...

French fries.

My favorite dessert is...

Soft chocolate chip cookie.

In my pantry, you will always find...

Olive oil.

Before I go out, I always make sure I have...

My phone and my water bottle.

My favorite music group is...

The "Guardian of the Galaxy" soundtrack.

So far, my best life advice is...

Don't let today's circumstances overwhelm you tomorrow.

One book Lauren recommends:

"A Mind of your Own" Dr. Kelly Brogan. This book helped me give my body the vitamins and nutrients it needed to help me get out of my postpartum depression.

Last word from Lauren:

No one does parenting the right day. All that your kids need is your love. The cli-

ents I see every day, their kids don't really know they're in a shelter; all they know is their mom is with them and they are loved.

Find out more about the community resources mentioned in this article at <https://bakhc.org/> and <https://kernalliance.org/>.



Kids with Special Needs Need Camp Too!

Sending a child to summer camp for the first time can make any parent nervous. But worries are often magnified for parents of kids with special needs. Images of sunlit lakes and carefree campers are often trumped by concerns about behavior, communication, and physical safety. Stacy De La O, whose daughter has high functioning autism, remembers the weeks leading up to Fia's first overnight camp experience as a 10-year-old. "I was a wreck!" she admits. "But we prepared well, and in the end I trusted the counselors at Blue Compass to take care of her."

Children with physical, cognitive, or medical challenges often have few opportunities to navigate the world without a parent close by. Kids with special needs benefit from summer camp in two major ways, according to seasoned camp director Kelly Kunsek of Camp Paivika, a program serving children with physical and developmental

disabilities. "Time away from families increases their independence," she says. "And as they meet other campers, their social connections expand." Parents benefit too. After a positive camp experience, a parent is both more aware of what a child can do for himself, and more comfortable allowing others to assist when needed.

Research indicates there are other benefits. Because many camps cater to specific needs, children can learn new social, physical, academic, or self-care skills. Interacting with others who share similar challenges—whether dietary, physical, or cognitive—lets a child's self-esteem and confidence blossom. And for some kids, camp provides a welcome respite from routine-packed schedules and visits to therapists.

De La O's worries evaporated when she picked Fia up after the session. "I could just see in her

face that she'd had a great time." That was just the beginning, and Fia continues to have wonderful camp experiences each summer.

Experts say that by planning well and following a few simple guidelines, you and your special needs child can reap the rewards of summer camp.

Decide what you want.

Camps come in all flavors. In fact, the American Camp Association (ACA) states that "47 percent of camps offer specialized programs for individuals with disabilities." Is your child ready for overnight camp? Or would a day camp suit her needs? Inclusive camps allow special needs kids to participate in activities with typical peers by making accommodations. Disability-specific camps hire staff trained to meet unique needs—visual impairment, autism, diabetes, severe allergies. Traditional camps offer tried-and-true activities like swimming, boating, crafts, and campfires. Specialty camps may focus on technology, sports, or the arts. Therapeutic camps offer interventions targeting speech/language, behavioral, and/or physical therapy goals. And combinations abound.

Do your research.

De La O says the parents at her daughter's school "exchange information to find the best camps and programs for our kids." Recommendations from teachers and service providers who know your child are also valuable. Look at camp materials online, read brochures, and watch videos. Has the camp been accredited by the ACA, or received recognition from a reputable organization? Make sure the camp's philosophy is a match for your family. Would your child do better in a competitive or cooperative atmosphere? Are you looking for a specific religious affiliation? Look at the physical layout of the camp and notice any potential problems.

Ask questions and get comfortable.

Speak with the director and counselors who will be working with your child. Questions include: What is the staff-to-camper ratio? What training do counselors receive? What is the turn-over rate for staff? (Camps where staff members return summer after summer tend to offer more stability and consistency.) Is there medical staff on site 24/7, and where is the nearest hospital? How are special diets handled? How will I communicate with my child during the session? How are behavioral issues addressed? Be forthright and honest in describing your child's

challenges. Does the staff seem willing and competent to handle these specific issues?

Prepare your child.

Talk about camp and the activities he'll get to try. Ask what he's looking forward to, as well as what makes him nervous. Role playing potential social situations helps some kids feel more confident. Before attending overnight camp, Kunsek suggests trying a sleepover with a friend or family member. In addition, she says, "Go to the open house event if possible. It's a good way for a child to become familiar with the setting and the staff, and to meet other campers." If a family can't attend the open house, Kunsek encourages scheduling a tour.

Think about funding.

Camps can be expensive, but families of children with special needs have options if they plan ahead. Many camps offer full and partial scholarships. Some churches and fraternal organizations (e.g. Lions Club, Rotary Club) will sponsor a child at a specific camp. If there is a proven need for continued education services over the summer, some school districts will pay for a camp that targets your child's IEP goals. And if your child is receiving therapeutic interventions at camp, your medical insurance may cover some of the cost.

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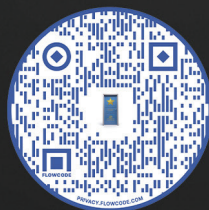
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The Benefits of Music Lessons Outweigh the Costs

Piano lessons were not an option for me as a child. As a trained musician, my father insisted his four daughters start piano lessons at an early age. I didn't always enjoy it and often grumbled about the mandated practice sessions before and after school. My teacher was strict and had high expectations of his students, but I'm thankful today piano lessons were a requirement my parents didn't budge on.

Music lessons compete with a host of other activities for our children's time and our money. How do we determine if music lessons are right for our child? Does it really make a difference in the long run if we expose our children to music education? The evidence of several studies supports the conclusion that the benefits of music lessons outweigh the cost and inconvenience it poses to parents to provide them.

What does the research show?

A study led by Dr. Glenn Schellenberg with six-year-old children and another study led by Dr. James Catterall at UCLA, tracking more than 25,000 students over a ten-year period, cite the advantages of music lessons.

- Increase in IQ scores
- Promotes intellectual development
- Achieve higher test scores on standardized tests and other proficiency exams
- More cooperative with teachers and peers
- More self-confident
- Better able to express their ideas
- Improvements in eye-hand coordination, concentration, memory development, listening skills and the overall process of learning

- Enhanced self-esteem and confidence as they perform in front of a teacher on a weekly basis and participate regularly in recitals or other performances.

Studying music encourages self-discipline and perseverance, along with time-management and organizational skills. Weekly lessons require students to prioritize their schedules to allow for regular practice time. When taking lessons as a child, I was prepared with each assigned piece to avoid an uncomfortable lesson or reprimand by my teacher. I was actively involved in church activities and sports at school, but I learned to manage my time to allow adequate practice time on the piano.

When should my child start?

Music lessons can begin as early as four years old but an older child (seven or eight years of age) has a greater attention span and focus for a musical instrument. It's important that a child has the desire to play an instrument, and not be forced by Mom or Dad to take lessons, but encouraged when showing an interest. Experimenting with different instruments will help a child determine what instrument he is best suited for. If a child begins lessons, he should commit to several months of study to gain a feel for the instrument.

Where can I find a teacher?

Finding a teacher that your child can relate to is also important. Learning to play an instrument should be fun and interactive, although it requires a fair amount of work. Referrals from other parents and students offer valuable insight. Interviewing a potential teacher helps identify teaching styles and personality traits before beginning lessons. It's also important to know the fee schedule and policies regarding make-up lessons.

Is it too late to learn?

It's never too late to learn to play a musical instrument. As a former piano instructor, I loved working with teenage and adult students, who were often more committed and disciplined in the learning process. Older students prioritize their lessons and practice time over other commitments and have better focus and longer attention spans, which allows for faster learning and greater satisfaction with the process. Music lessons offer a new challenge for teenagers and adults and can have therapeutic effects.

Learning to play a musical instrument is like earning an education—once you obtain the skill it can't be taken away from you and yet, can provide enjoyment and satisfaction for years to come. So, what are you waiting for? Seize the opportunity and schedule music lessons today for you or your child!

Bio: Gayla Grace is a freelance writer and mom to five children who have all taken music lessons. She enjoys playing the piano at her local church and other community events.



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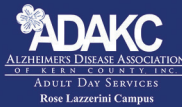
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you can do it

Eggs to 'Dye' For!

Tips for making the most colorful, fun-to-find Easter eggs at home!

Coloring eggs is a beloved Easter tradition. Eggs long have been symbols of fertility and rebirth, making them fitting icons for spring.

Dyeing eggs is an entertaining activity, but one that also may have some religious significance. According to some religious scholars, Mary Magdalene, the woman who was the first person to see Jesus Christ after His resurrection, was holding a plain egg in her hand while waiting for the emperor to share the good news. The emperor then told her that Jesus' resurrection was as improbable as that egg suddenly blushing. According to the story, the egg then turned red.

Whether your family celebrates Easter as a religious holiday or a celebration of spring, it's always fun to color eggs, and these guidelines can make the process go smoothly and leave you with brilliant results.

Hard-boil eggs last minute.

Finally a great excuse to procrastinate! Good Housekeeping recommends boiling eggs for 11 minutes for a hard boil, on the same day you color. Do not chill the eggs afterward; warm eggs absorb dye more effectively for more vivid results.

Prepare for spills.

Let's be honest. Dye is messy and can stain furniture, clothing or tablecloths. So be ready in advance! Dress everyone in clothing that you're not worried about staining. Also, cover work surfaces with an old tablecloth and newspapers to soak up any spills.

Have a drying rack ready.

Make a drying rack to ensure that eggs will dry evenly. This can be a rimmed cookie sheet lined with layers of paper towels to absorb any excess dye that runs off the eggs. Or push pins into thick foam board and place the eggs on top to allow air to circulate.

Ditch plastic.

Consider using glass bowls or ceramic mugs to house the colored dye solutions. These vessels are more sturdy than

plastic cups, and less likely to be overturned by eager young hands.

Grab the tongs.

Scissor-style tongs are ideal tools for retrieving eggs from the dye. Eggs tend to slide off of the spoons or wire rings provided in kits, leading to splashing and kids dunking their fingers in to grab eggs.

Keep on stirring!

Stir dyeing cups often to guarantee consistent color.

Tape it up.

Use electrical or painters tape to make patterns on Easter eggs. Dip the eggs and let dry. Afterwards, remove the tape to reveal the designs.

Think outside the dye.

If food coloring-based dyes seem too messy, use watercolor paint sets and allow everyone to get creative (yet washable!).

Reconsider eating them.

While some people may want to use Easter eggs for recipes later on, it may be safer to boil up a fresh batch of eggs for that purpose, even if it seems wasteful.

According to Emily Rubin, RD, LDN of the Thomas Jefferson University Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, "hard-boiled eggs should be refrigerated within two hours of cooking and discarded if left out for more than two hours at room temperature."

Chances are it may take two hours or more for children to find hard-boiled eggs hidden by the Easter bunny. Don't risk it.



you can do it



Celebrate Passover with Homemade Traditional Charoset

Passover is steeped in tradition. Many of these traditions involve symbolic foods which tell the story of the Israelites and their miraculous exodus from Egyptian slavery.

One such food is charoset (also spelled haroset), which symbolizes the mortar the Israelites used to build bricks when they were slaves in Egypt. Charoset is a fruit relish used on small sandwiches made from matzo and bitter herbs. The bittersweet taste is supposed to teach the bitterness of bondage and the sweetness of freedom.

Passover celebrants, or anyone curious about the Jewish culture, can make their own charoset by following this recipe, courtesy of *Israel My Glory* magazine.

Charoset

Makes 15 tablespoons

Ingredients

- 1 large apple, any variety
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- Small amount of lemon juice (optional)

Directions

The easiest method is to put the apples and nuts into a food processor and pulse until finely diced. Sprinkle enough lemon juice on the mixture to keep the apples from turning brown. Then mix in the other ingredients.

Keep in mind that the recipe is very forgiving, so the measurements do not have to be exact. Some people also mix in a little grape juice or wine.



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The Dragon's Shower

When our bedtime stories take us all the way to Costa Rica

"Once there was a dragon named Dragon," I began. This is how all my Dragon stories begin. It gives me a moment (nine beats anyway) to think of a story. During those nine beats, I look around desperately, trying to think of something, anything, for story material. My children think that Dragon sounds suspiciously like whichever of them I am telling the story to. I'm not sure why there is any suspicion about it. The truth is, I have no idea what I'm about to say.

After that first line, there might be a story about how Dragon packed his suitcase with only stuffed animals and arrived at his family vacation destination with no clothes. He might be a baby dragon who doesn't sleep at night. Or a five-year-old Kindergartener who tends to interrupt his teacher's lessons simply to say, "Poop."

"Ahem... Once there was a Dragon named Dragon." This meandering story begins with Dragon juggling mangoes. But he keeps dropping one, and every time he drops one, it splats on the ground and ants come. So he has to climb his mango tree to get another one.

"Wait, Mom." Samantha interrupts. "There are no mango trees around here."

"Right. Dragon lives in... Costa Rica."

"I thought he lived in Bakersfield."

"Uh... he does. Most of the time. But, did you know? Dragon spent two years living in Costa Rica?" I am totally making this up as I go, but since she wants to know what is going to happen, she lets me proceed.

Dragon gets dirty and sweaty from all that climbing—and sticky from mango juice. But when he comes in the house at the end of the day, the first words out of his mouth are, "Can I skip my shower tonight?"

Dragon's mom says no, and when Dragon gets in the shower and soaps up his hair--

"Mom! He's a dragon! He doesn't have hair!" Samantha interrupts my story.

"Oh, right... he soaps up his—"

"Scales!" my children shout in unison.

"OK, his scales are full of suds when all of a sudden, the water turns icy cold because his younger sister Ashley has taken a long shower and used it all."

After his shower (his mom has to rinse the suds out of his scales), Dragon hides under a pile of blankets to get warm, avoiding the inevitable chore of putting on clothing.

Dragon's mom eventually tells him, "I don't want to see you again until you have clothes on." Dragon doesn't come out, and his mom (who has forgotten she forbid him to come out until he's dressed) stomps into his room to call him to dinner—and doesn't see him. "Dragon?" she asks.

"Yes?" comes the timid reply.

"What are you doing? Get out here. Dinner is ready." Dragon doesn't move. His mom pulls off the covers to reveal a shivering dragon with a book in his hands.

"Did you just read a whole book?"

"Um. The whole series."

"Oh good grief, Dragon. It's dinner time. Get dressed and join us, please."

Soon, Dragon appears at the table. He is barefoot, dressed in shorts. He is shivering.

"What are you doing?"
"I'm so c-c-cold."

"Dragon. Clothes. Put on some long pants and a sweatshirt. And for goodness' sake, some shoes!"

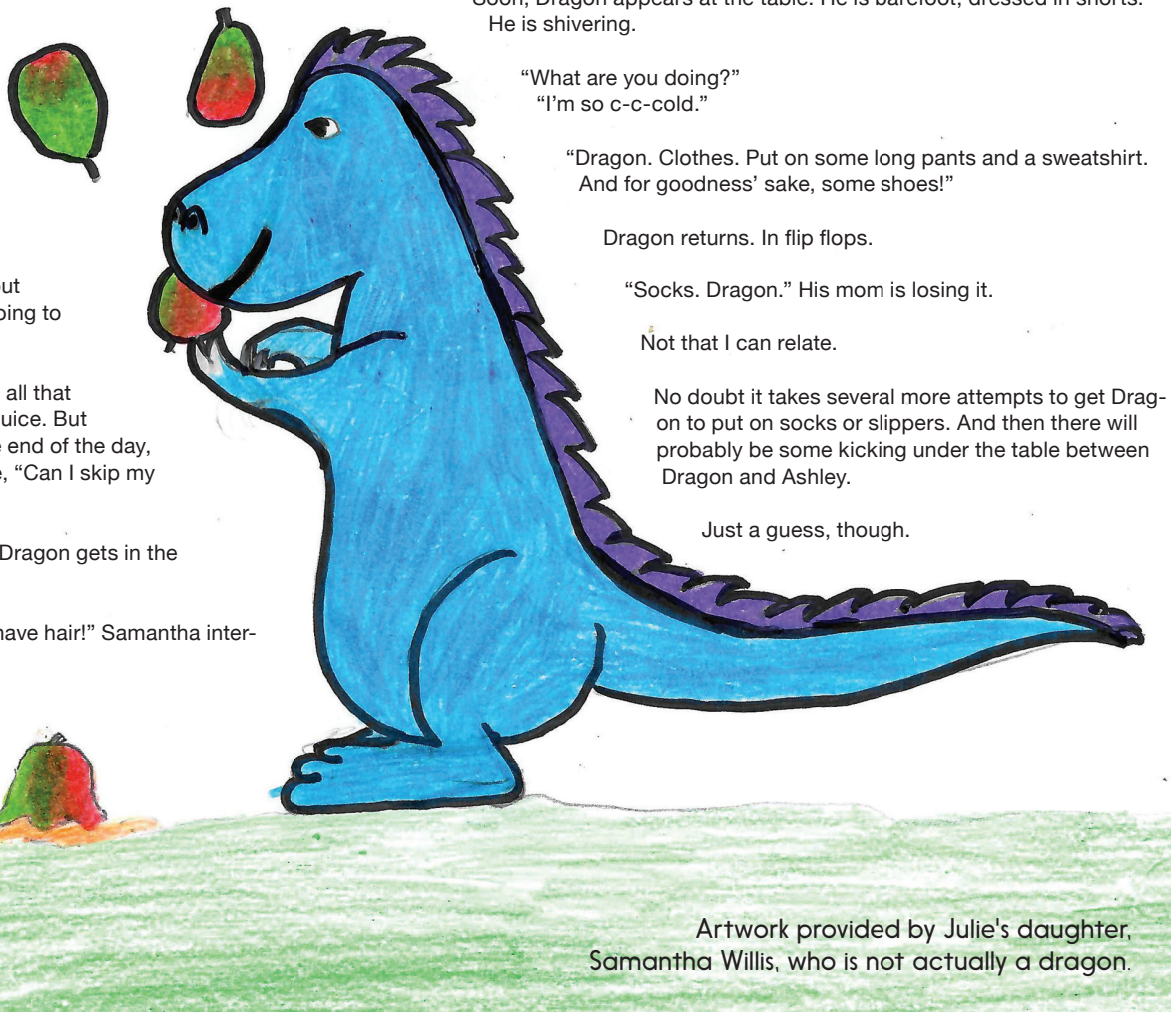
Dragon returns. In flip flops.

"Socks. Dragon." His mom is losing it.

Not that I can relate.

No doubt it takes several more attempts to get Dragon to put on socks or slippers. And then there will probably be some kicking under the table between Dragon and Ashley.

Just a guess, though.



Artwork provided by Julie's daughter, Samantha Willis, who is not actually a dragon.



Part-Time Jobs for Teens: Encouraging Kids to Get a Job in Fast Food

"I passed!" I shouted to my parents after completing the driver's license test.

My mom smiled, gave me a hug and said, "I knew you would."

My dad grumbled, "Congrats," followed by "Now you can get a job since you can drive yourself there."

And with that glowing endorsement, my teen job search began. I decided to apply for lifeguard positions since the idea of getting paid to get a suntan sounded appealing along with being around cute teen guys with their shirts off.

Well, I found out that being a lifeguard was not as glamorous as it sounded. Instead of getting a suntan I mostly got a sunburn and a lot of times I was bored staring at a pool for ten hours. Sure those teen guys were cute, but they were too busy swimming laps to notice me.

When my teens are ready to get a job, I'm going to nudge them towards a more practical vocation in the fast food domain. I've been reading up on it and there are some perks I never considered.

Bonuses

If you thought bonuses were only for big time executives, then think again. Apparently there is

a shortage of teen employees in the fast food industry which has led to franchise owners offering creative incentives such as bonuses for working a certain number of hours.

Tuition Reimbursement or Scholarships

I had no idea (and it might not have been an option when I was a teen) that some fast food chains offer tuition reimbursement or scholarships. Some restaurants that offer tuition reimbursement are Starbucks, Chipotle, McDonald's and Pizza Hut. Scholarships are awarded to employees by Burger King, McDonald's, Chick-fil-A, Walmart, Taco Bell, KFC and Pizza Hut. None of the pools I worked at helped me pay for college.

Multi-Tasking Skills

Anytime I'm picking up my food from the drive thru at Wendy's, I'm amazed at the person's ability to both take an order and fill a different one at the same time. This is a skill that will be beneficial for the rest of your teen's life. I wish I had this multi-tasking ability when I attempted to feed twin crying babies in the middle of the night or helping my teen twins get ready for school at 6:00 am.

Opportunity for Advancement

Most fast food chains have different levels of employees such as shift supervisor, general manager and upper management. This chain (pun intended) of command allows your teen to learn about different roles in business and the opportunity to advance to a higher level. At the pool I where I worked, the same supervisor was there when I started and when I left for college so there wasn't much of a chance for me to be in a management role.

Learning Customer Service

As a lifeguard I did interact with people but most of the time I watched them swim. At a fast food chain your teen is interacting with customers for the entire time they are working. This entails dealing with many different types of personalities and ensuring the customer receives their order. This skill is something that can help your teen in school and future jobs.

Who's Ready to Take An Order?

Working in fast food may not be a teen's first choice as a part time job, but the benefits make it worth considering. With the cost of college at an all-time high, a scholarship or tuition reimbursement is definitely a huge perk. Unlike my lifeguard job, you also wouldn't need sunscreen and from the looks of most drive-thrus they would never be bored.

This article was originally published on "Your Teen."

KERN COUNTY FAMILY MAGAZINE *daily happenings* THE **BEST** LOCAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS!

Our printed version of the calendar has been edited for space. For more details about these events or activities not listed please visit www.kerncountyfamily.com

April 2

Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra: Peter and the Wolf

The Bakersfield Symphony is excited to add a family concert to our season of events this year. Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf is a story beloved by generations, and we hope you and your family will join us for an afternoon of fun and music.

Rabobank Arena, Theater and Convention Center
1001 Truxtun Ave,
Bakersfield, CA
Time: 2pm
<https://www.mechanics-bankarena.com/events/detail/bakersfield-symphony-orchestra-peter-and-the-wolf>

April 8

MLB Opening Day!



Dodgers at Rockies (new series)
Marlins at Giants (new series)

April 10

A Day in the Wild West
Come relive a day in the wild west with the SoCal Settlers at the Kern County Museum on Sunday, April 10, 2022.

The day will feature a bank robbery, gunfights and even an opportunity

to pan for gold! Kids will be able to enjoy games, badging of junior deputies, schoolhouse tours and more.

Food and beverages will be available for purchase.

Admission is \$5 per person. Children 3 and under are free.

Kern County Museum
3801 Chester Ave,
Bakersfield, CA
661-437-3330
Time: 9am - 2pm
<https://kerncountymuseum.org/lori-brock-discovery-center/calendar-of-events/>



April 17



April 22

Dinner at the Derby

The annual Dinner at the Derby fundraiser benefiting Youth Connection, Boys and Girls Clubs of Kern County, and Bakersfield North Rotary Foundation will be off to the races on April 22, 2022.

The races are pre-recorded with the winners of each of the 12 races entered into a drawing for the grand prize. The gambling is aboveboard with winners being paid in tickets for the raffle, which consists of baskets donated by board members of Youth Connection. The buffet dinner is Southern-themed. The parade of hats has guests don festive headwear in honor of "race day." This fabulous event also includes a live and silent auction.

\$150 Single ticket (includes Naming/Ownership of 1 Virtual Racehorse) OR \$250 Couple's ticket

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April 6 & 20

Time: 10:30am

April 30

Time: 6:00pm

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bakersfieldcondors.com/schedule/schedule-list/

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April 23

Blippi The Musical

Blippi The Musical brings the energetic and loveable character Blippi off the screen and onto the stage with world-class production, audience engagement and amazing music. Children from the ages of 2 to 7 years old across the world have quickly taken a liking to Blippi's charismatic personality and innovative teaching lessons! In the Live show they will continue to learn about the world around them while singing and dancing along with this one of a kind show.

Mechanics Bank Theater
1001 Truxtun Ave.
Bakersfield, CA
661-852-7300
Time: 2pm
<https://www.mechanics-bankarena.com/events/de-tail/blippi-the-musical>

April 23 & 24

25th Scottish Games and Gatherings

The 25th Kern County Scottish Games and Gatherings are scheduled to be held on April 23rd and 24th 2022. We are looking forward to a very exciting Games this year! We will have the Heavy Athletics, Music, Pipe Bands, Food and Merchandise Vendors, Clans, and Much More. Local Bands to Include, Whiskey Galore, Dublin Rain, Wrenwood Sessions, Banshee in the Kitchen, and the Wicked Tinkers. Also, featuring

Katie Jane Band, and Mayde in Ireland, Golden Bough, Birds of Prey, from Raptor Events. Adult pre sale tickets single day, or two day, are available on Eventbrite, until 4/22. No price increase for adult tickets from 2019.

Tickets available at the gate the days of the events. \$25 adult, \$35 adult two day, children 12-5 yrs of age \$10. Children 5 yrs of age and younger are free. Military, Students, with I.D. and Seniors will have discounts as well.

Kern County Fairgrounds
1142 South P Street,
Bakersfield, CA
661-865-8890
Time: 9am – 3pm
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/25th-scottish-games-and-gatherings-tickets-274420728787>

April 24

Village Flea

Bring your friends and family to our fun outdoor flea market. Enjoy music while you shop vintage goods, antiques, handmade items, and more!

Food will be available for purchase at several food trucks.

\$5 General Admission. Free admission for 12 and under.

Kern County Museum
3801 Chester Ave
Bakersfield, CA
661-437-3330
Time: 8am - 4pm
<https://kerncountymuseum.org/village-flea/>

HAPPENINGS CONTINUE

Worship Guide

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ONGOING HAPPENINGS

Saturdays

F St Farmers Market

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City Center: 3201 F St. Parking Lot, Bakersfield, CA
(661) 342-4671
Time: 7:45am – 12pm
www.visitbakersfield.com/events-calendar/valley-farmers-market/

Lakeshore Farmer's Market - Wofford Heights

We have some great farmer's markets in Kern County, and this is another one. Give your whole family the gift of fresh fruits, vegetables, and home-made goodies. Drive up the hill for some amazing finds on Saturdays.
7466 Wofford Blvd., Wofford Heights
(760) 417-9575
Time: 9am – 1pm

Mondays

Hoffmann Hospice Grief Support HEALING HEARTS

(Parents that have lost children)
This is a particularly difficult time to experience the death of a loved one. Hoffmann Hospice Grief Support groups are led by trained grief counselors. The meetings are free and open to all. You do not need to have a loved one on our service to attend.

Space is limited, reservation required for all groups. Please call (661) 410-1010 to schedule.
ZOOM (online group)
(661) 410-1010
Time: 5:30-6:30pm
<https://www.hoffmannhospice.org/grief-support-groups/>

Art Classes for Children with Charlotte White

All Media Art Classes with Charlotte White. First Grade through 8th Grade. Materials are provided by the instructor. Cost: \$10.00 per class. For registration and additional information contact Charlotte White (661) 330-2676 or charlottewhiteartist@icloud.com.
Bakersfield Art Association Art Center Gallery
1607 19th Street, Bakersfield (661) 330-2676
Time: 4pm – 5pm, 5pm – 6pm

PLANNING A LOCAL EVENT YOU'D LOVE TO SHARE?

Our Happenings section is dedicated to bringing the most current local events to our readers, but we need your help! You can submit your calendar events at

kerncountyfamily.com

"Submit Calendar Event" can be found under the Calendar tab. Please submit calendar events by the 10th of each month prior to ensure we have enough time to consider your event. We don't have room for all happenings to be listed in print, but all appear online.

Best of all, it's FREE!

kern county
Family
magazine



ACTIVITY CORNER ANSWERS

8	9	6	9	1	7	3	4	2	3
9	2	4	8	5	8	1	7	5	1
3	7	1	7	2	6	8	9	6	8
4	8	3	2	5	7	6	1	9	6
7	1	4	5	1	7	3	8	2	2
6	9	6	2	8	1	8	7	5	4
5	6	7	7	6	8	6	2	3	9
1	7	3	7	8	7	9	6	9	5
3	2	6	9	4	5	1	7	5	4
8	9	6	9	5	4	1	7	5	4

CROSSWORD

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Across | Down |
| 1. Laborers | 1. Laughter |
| 5. LOL | 2. Breathed |
| 6. Hat | 3. Earliest |
| 7. Radiate | 4. Smiling |

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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KERN AUTISM NETWORK, INC.
"Kern Autism Network Inc. provides support, awareness, information and education to families and the public throughout Kern County"
Happy Easter!
Parent Support Group Meeting Wednesday, April 6th - 6-7:30 p.m.
Autism Awareness Car Parade and BBQ on Saturday, April 2nd register via Eventbrite
Sensory Friendly Easter Bunny on Sunday, April 10th register via Eventbrite
Mother's Day Group Portrait on Saturday, April 30th register via Eventbrite
EARLY SIGNS OF AUTISM:
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• Repetitive language
• Little or no eye contact
• Repetitive mannerisms
• Inflexible routines or rituals
• Preoccupation with object parts
• Little interest in friendships
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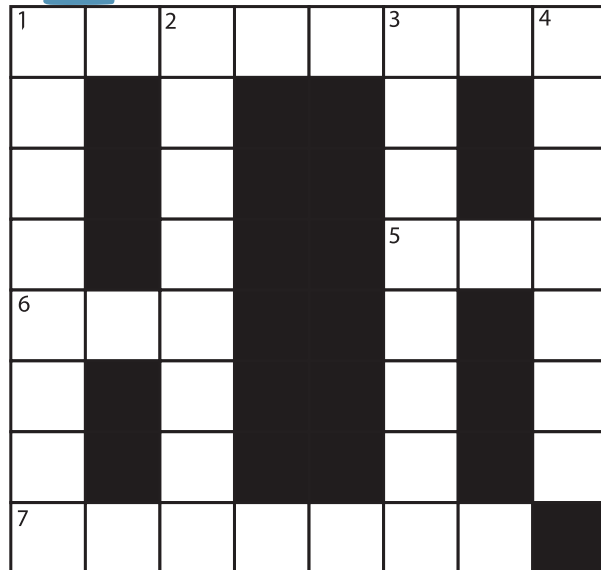
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APRIL ACTIVITY CORNER

puzzle
answers
on page
26

Crossword



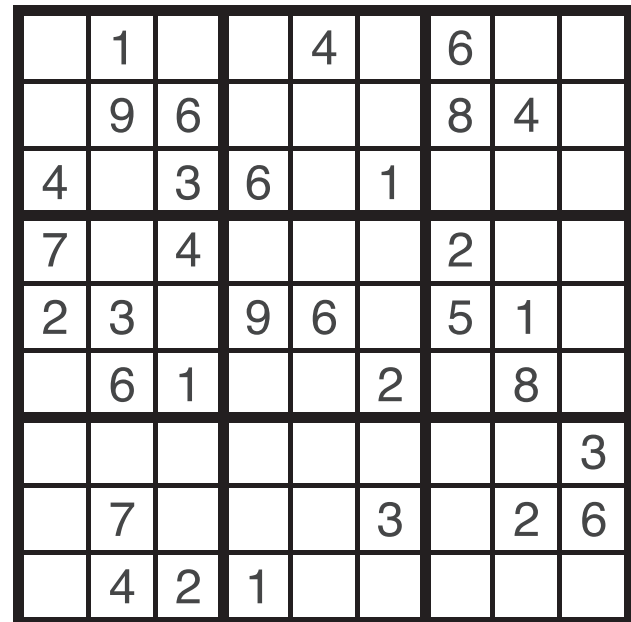
ACROSS

1. People who work
5. "Laughing out loud"
6. Covers head
7. Emit light or heat in the form of rays

DOWN

1. Action of laughing
2. Inhaled and exhaled
3. First to arrive
4. Showing teeth in a happy way

Sudoku

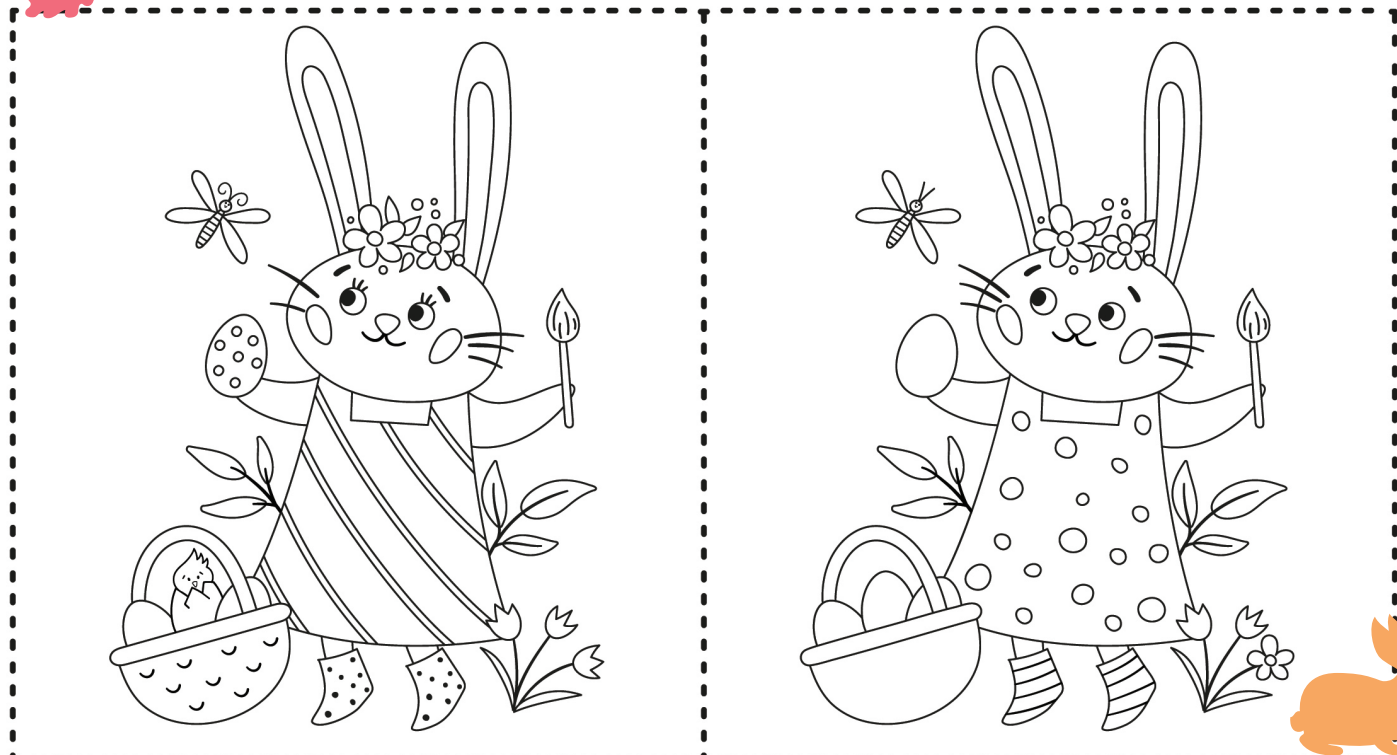


Level: Beginner

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve: the number 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. Figure out the order the numbers will appear by using the clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets!



There are 10 differences below. Can you find them all?



APRIL ACTIVITY CORNER

puzzle
answers
on page
26

Agriculture Word Search

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G	H	Y	V	G	E	W	R	Z	Z	A	A	S	S	D	N	S	A	U	B
N	I	W	A	N	P	A	G	R	Y	A	W	T	V	S	O	I	L	O	R
I	R	A	L	I	V	L	R	R	V	D	Z	S	G	M	S	G	F	P	I
D	R	D	S	N	H	T	W	B	A	G	R	E	R	D	G	A	N	H	T
E	I	W	M	I	N	M	L	H	V	S	D	P	E	F	O	Y	N	V	W
E	G	Z	V	A	O	O	Y	T	M	Z	S	E	E	A	S	E	U	R	Z
S	A	P	A	R	E	I	I	E	A	U	W	I	N	L	P	Y	P	P	A
E	T	R	I	L	T	F	S	T	V	E	W	U	E	U	Y	N	L	H	R
R	I	U	W	G	S	M	P	E	A	M	G	V	R	E	A	V	A	V	E
Z	O	N	C	F	O	O	D	S	V	Z	E	W	Y	R	R	H	N	S	C
M	N	I	R	M	P	L	R	R	A	L	I	V	F	N	D	U	T	S	R
O	V	N	L	T	M	D	Z	Y	O	P	Y	L	U	T	E	Z	S	P	A
L	V	G	H	I	O	C	N	O	U	U	E	U	I	H	T	A	Z	V	B
E	Y	Z	V	G	C	O	O	P	R	G	G	S	A	T	F	P	H	Z	G
S	A	W	R	R	W	N	I	T	N	A	A	H	O	P	R	H	Y	S	R
M	L	U	T	L	U	T	T	H	A	Y	C	C	T	H	T	E	N	L	A
Z	B	C	M	M	G	R	A	C	D	H	L	V	N	U	C	O	F	C	S
S	E	O	W	P	S	O	R	L	E	N	R	I	C	H	M	E	N	T	S
S	P	R	W	D	P	L	E	U	F	V	B	C	W	E	O	S	D	S	W
I	I	O	B	H	W	W	A	M	E	P	I	O	F	V	Z	R	W	E	W

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April is Read for Life Month!

Kern Literacy Council may have made this one up, but we encourage all families to celebrate Kern County Read for Life Month with us throughout April. Anyone who shares a picture celebrating the joy of reading will get a free book in return. Photos will also be shared as part of the Read for Life Celebration fundraiser on April 28.

Kern Literacy Council has been helping transform lives through literacy since 1966. The key to literacy is reading and having many books in the home. And, when we say Read for Life, we mean your whole life AND to improve the quality of your life. In fact, the mission of Kern Literacy Council is to empower individuals to improve the quality of their lives through literacy education. The earlier you start the better!



"The American Dream is about equal opportunity for everyone who works hard. If we don't give everyone the ability to simply read and write, then we aren't giving everyone the chance to succeed."

-Barbara Bush

Read to Your Baby from Birth

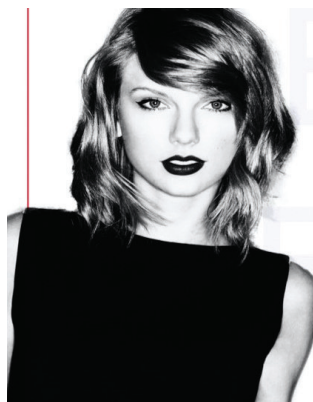
Commit to reading or "book cuddling" at least 15 minutes a day. The more the better and minutes don't have to be all at once. Don't worry that they don't understand. The brain is associating the positive feeling of words and love. Feel free to use the illustrations to make up stories but also know that children's books use many words not used in everyday speech so vocabulary can grow fast. The likelihood of success in school can be set as early as age three.

Read Together as Your Child Learns to Read

Research shows that if you have early readers keep reading aloud and also be there for them to practice reading to you. Let them choose their books and share reading aloud duties. The big goal is to make sure kids are reading on grade level by the end of third grade. This milestone is crucial as kids go from "learning to read" to "reading to learn." When kids are reading below grade level at the end of third grade, they are 25% more likely to drop out of high school. Some states even use the number of kids reading below grade level as part of their 10-year planning for the number of prison beds that will be needed.

From 4th Grade, Your Child is Reading to Learn

Keep encouraging reading and get help for your kids if they are struggling. Many kids struggling with reading start having behavior problems to distract from their lack of skills.



"I think that when you can escape into a book it trains your imagination to think big and to think that more can exist than what you see."

-Taylor Swift

Young Adult Books Help Teens See They Are Not Alone

As your child grows into a teenager, encourage their extra-curricular reading. You can't believe how much reading helps with vocabulary and college readiness. Books also ease loneliness and the challenges of puberty.

Parents Should Model Reading for Pleasure

Share your joy of reading with your growing children. Have books and magazines throughout the house. Talk about books you've read whether in hard copy or online. Keep reading as you become empty-nesters.

"What I love most about reading: It gives you the ability to reach higher ground. And keep climbing."

-Oprah Winfrey



Children and Grandchildren Read to Your Elders

Reading aloud is not only for children; adults enjoy it too. For the elderly who loved to read all their lives, listening to someone read to them can bring profound comfort and joy.

How will you celebrate Kern County Read for Life Month? Follow us on Instagram or like us on Facebook for suggestions. If you are interested in helping others learn to read or have new or very gently used children's books to donate, visit our website at www.kernliteracy.org or give us a call at 661.324.3213.



READ
FOR
LIFE

For more information on Kern Literacy Council, call us at 661-324-3213, or check out our website at www.kernliteracy.org.



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