

# Arlington Family Connection

supporting children age six and under and those who care for them



Volume II, Issue 7 \* November 2003  
[www.arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](http://www.arlingtonfamilyconnection.org)



## SteveSongs to Perform November Concert

by Bonnie Walsh

This summer, children all over New England were jumping, singing, screaming and waving their hands along with a children's singer that has for the many years been one of Arlington parents' hidden treasures—Steve Roslonek, better known as “SteveSongs.” After moving to Arlington in 1998, Steve left behind his previous persona as an Anderson Consulting business consultant and began regularly singing and playing his guitar at Another Place to Grow. From this start, he quickly grew a loyal and very enthusiastic fan base of pre- and elementary schoolers all across the area. Indeed, respect for his music was not only from children—his three recordings of children's music have all won Parent's Choice awards, with the popular *On a Flying Guitar* taking home Gold Honors.

There is something for everyone at a SteveSongs concert. Steve gives a high-energy, family-friendly performance. Children are quickly captivated by Steve's friendly manner and encouragement to act out the lyrics, dance along, and, when called for in the song (or even if not called for), scream out loud. One thing that distinguishes him from many children's singers, however, is that his lyrics and singing are also palatable to the adults in the audience, many of whom know the lyrics better than their children. His mellow, smooth voice has gained Steve a

cross-generational appeal; he has been described as a James Taylor of children's singers. In fact, Steve began his singing career in 'grown up' a capella groups, sang with the professional a capella group Five O'Clock Shadow, and is putting out a 'grown up' CD within the next few months.

Steve is expanding his fan base in other ways as well.

In January, he will be launching a nationwide tour, during which he will be charming children from Miami to St. Louis as well as up and down the West Coast. In addition to this hectic tour schedule, he is working on a much anticipated new children's CD and has also contracted with a publishing company to record educational songs to assist young children learning English. Finally, this very busy singer is working on completely revamping his Web site. While continuing to update the tour schedule and CD information

found on the current site,

he is also planning on updating the look and adding features such as a travelogue to check in and give updates while Steve travels around the country. (*continued page 3*)

**SteveSongs**  
The Regent  
Theatre  
November 8  
10:30 am

This is AFC Day at  
the Regent Theatre!  
[www.regenttheatre.com](http://www.regenttheatre.com)



## Arlington's Options in Early Education

by Denny Lewis

I am a first generation daycare father. My mother quit work when the kids came along and that was that, so I have no history of preferences or unasked-for-but-you're-getting-it-anyway parental advice about daycare to fall back on. Ditto for my wife, Wendy. To pull matters even farther away from the previous generational scenario, I quit what I marginally called work and stayed home with the children.

When the time seemed right, we enrolled our first child, Alexandra, in on-site daycare at my wife's work. Not an ounce of debate there—the

proximity of Alex to Mommy, or rather Mommy to Alex, was clearly the deciding factor. (Wendy could rappel down the side of the building and land in the children's center in seconds flat at the sign of Alex's first snuffle.) Our second, Trevor, followed into the center with the same amount of deliberation.

Recently, the necessity of change has descended upon us and left us with actual choices to be made. At nearly the same time, AFC's “Options in Early Childhood Education” was announced as if sent down from above. (*continued page 7*)

## Table of Contents

Page 2	AFC News & Notes Newsletter, Web Help Needed
Page 3	Cutting Down on Clutter Waltham: Eating Out
Page 4	You Can Lead a Toddler to the Table
Page 5	From Partnership Track to Parent
Page 6	Calendar of Events
Page 7	AFC Options Book Membership Form
Page 8	Save the Dates Member Outreach

# AFC Goes Nut-Free



After hearing from members whose children have severe nut allergies and the worries they face every time they take their children out in public, Arlington Family Connection has decided to establish a nut-free policy at all AFC events. We ask that when you attend an AFC event, whether it be a meeting, a playgroup, a talk or an outing, that you leave snacks with nut products at home. It's a small thing to do and will make our events safer for some of our very small, very allergic constituents (and their parents/siblings). Also, to the extent possible, please keep your children from sharing snacks with other kids until you know whether that child has food allergies.

Some of our events are held at other locations, such as the SteveSongs concert at the Regent Theatre, where, obviously, we have no control over the food offerings. In those cases, we just ask that everyone do their best.

If you are interested in helping AFC go further in accommodating children with other types of allergies, please come to one of our Steering Committee meetings to discuss what kind of role you would like to play in this important issue. *-Jen Goebel, Editor*

## Join the AFC Steering Committee!

For more information about AFC, please contact any of the following Steering Committee members or join us at our next meeting, Wednesday, November 5 at 8pm. Contact anyone below for the meeting's location.

All Steering Meetings are open and AFC members are encouraged to attend. We will be planning future events and discussing issues of interests to Arlington families. If you would like to get more involved with AFC, or if you have a special interest you would like to see us pursue, please come to a meeting!

Wendy Clarke 781-648-2341  
[wendy\\_clarke@us.ibm.com](mailto:wendy_clarke@us.ibm.com)

Justine Lynch 781-648-0006  
Treasurer  
[treasurer@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](mailto:treasurer@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org)

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[outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](mailto:outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org)  
[membership@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](mailto:membership@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org)

# AFC Volunteers Needed to ...

## ...Assemble AFC's Newsletter

We need a newsletter calendar editor to gather and confirm new and continuing listings for our very much referred-to calendar section. We also need help with the layout and design of the newsletter on alternate months. Short time commitments welcome! For more info, please contact Jen at [newsletter@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](mailto:newsletter@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org).

## ... Support AFC's Web Site

We are seeking one or two volunteers to keep AFC's Web site fresh, informative, and up-to-date. If you know basic HTML coding and/or web design, we need your help! Contact Ruth at [info@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](mailto:info@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org) or 781-643-2362.

## ... Represent AFC on Townwide PTO

AFC has been invited to join Arlington's townwide PTO. The group represents all the schools in town and meets four times per year to share fundraising and activity ideas, to do joint fundraising and host guest speakers. Please consider volunteering for this important position. The next meeting will be Monday, Jan 26 at 7pm. Please contact both Amy Cohen of the PTO at [Acoh7680@aol.com](mailto:Acoh7680@aol.com) and [info@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](mailto:info@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org) for more info.

## ... Help Plan AFC Outings

We need fun-loving members to help organize and lead outings both with and without children. We also welcome suggestions for future activities and trips. Contact Ruth at [outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](mailto:outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org) or 781-643-2362.

## ...Start a Community Service Committee

We envision a group whose purpose is to facilitate simple projects that will involve preschool-age children in giving back to the children and senior citizens of our community. Whether it be collecting outgrown board books to donate to the library, maintaining a public garden, or making a simple craft to brighten the residence of a senior, it will introduce young children to community service. Please contact Ruth at [outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](mailto:outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org) or 781-643-2362.

## ... Join the Newsletter Team, Submit Articles

We want to hear from you! Send articles, letters, suggestions, essays and ideas to [newsletter@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](mailto:newsletter@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org). Send items to [calendar@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](mailto:calendar@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org). December article deadline: November 10; calendar deadline: November 17.

### Editorial policy

The **Arlington Family Connection** (AFC) newsletter is published monthly and is free with membership. Published articles reflect the views of the respective authors and do not necessarily represent the views of AFC. Childcare, healthcare and legal information is provided for informational purposes only. It is not intended as a substitute for medical or professional advice. Always consult your own healthcare provider for any decisions relating to your child's well-being.

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# Cutting Down on Clutter is Good for the Earth

by Melissa Lucius

It seems like everyone I talk to today is trying to de-clutter their house. They're cleaning out closets and bringing trashbags full of stuff to Goodwill. They're looking for a little space, a little simplicity, a little serenity. Well, it turns out that decluttering, and not acquiring so much in the first place (some call it pre-cycling), has an added benefit: it's good for the earth.

Buying less "stuff" means less impact on the environment. Fewer materials are used, and less ends up in the landfill. But there's hidden value in keeping the stuff to a minimum. In doing so, we are encouraging appreciation, concentration and creativity in our children, instead of materialism, consumerism and greed. A child who grows up in a clutter-free house has space to focus and blossom; today's possession-focused kid is tomorrow's overconsumer. See [www.newdream.org/campaign/kids/index.html](http://www.newdream.org/campaign/kids/index.html) for tips on raising kids in our highly commercialized culture.

The world these days is set up for us to consume, consume, consume. The prevailing mindset is, "I have money and I worked hard for it. I want my family to have it all, and I want the world to see that. The more stuff the better." Well, how about, "I choose quality over quantity. I choose not to embrace a lifestyle of excess. I want my kids to grow up to be appreciative rather than entitled. I don't care what other people think, but I do care about my kids and the environment."

Every time we acquire "stuff" it has an impact on the earth's resources. And when we acquire too many things, we encourage ingrained consumerism: the kids grow up

## SteveSongs Concert

*(continued from page 1)*

Although he has recently moved from the area, Arlington retains a special place in Steve's heart as the launching pad for his career. "It is like a second home to me," he says, adding that over the years he has seen children grow up, first attending his pre-school shows, then, later, showing up at the libraries, town fairs and elementary school performances. "It's like having hundreds of nieces and nephews."

Steve will be performing at the Regent Theatre on November 8 in one of his rare shows with a full band accompaniment. He will also be performing at the Calvary Church on January 10 and then will kick off his nationwide tour on January 19 at Temple Emunah in Lexington. Finally, he plans to showcase some of his 'grown up' songs at Ryles Jazz Club in Cambridge on November 6. For more information, including the latest on show dates and updates when his new CDs are available, or to be added to his mailing list, go to the StevSongs website at [www.stevesongs.com](http://www.stevesongs.com).

thinking that all this excess is completely normal, and crave being surrounded by stuff. Then when they're old enough to have their own household, they'll want to fill it up to the brim too. Where does it end? When we've used up all of the earth's resources?

How does it look not to have so much stuff around? Take toys, for example. Kids do well with a few well chosen, high quality, versatile toys. This approach encourages them to concentrate on one thing, to learn it well, and to get full enjoyment from it. When kids have few toys, they figure out how to use things in different ways, and how to combine them. This is the essence of creativity. Compare this to a situation where kids have so many toys that they flit from one thing to the other, not really appreciating any single toy, yet feeling overwhelmed by the sheer quantity of them. And they don't need to use creativity, because there's a toy for every whim.

Toys are just one example. Cutting down on anything is good for the earth: clothes, magazine subscriptions, videos, you name it. We have five plastic kid cups in the house, because that's all we need, and that's less that will eventually go in the trash. Our daughter gets two or three new pairs of shoes each season (not ten) for the same reason. The earth doesn't hold an infinite amount of wood, metal, water and other resources, and we are running low on these things. It's a one-way trip from the earth to the factory to the store to your home to the landfill.

I encourage you to go forth and declutter your house. Then keep it that way, for your own serenity, and for the good of the earth.

*Melissa has two daughters and is a project manager at a software consulting company. E-mail: [mrlucius@netzero.net](mailto:mrlucius@netzero.net).*



### Waltham: Eating Out with the Kids

by Judy A. Petrie

**Watch City Brewery, opens 4 pm on Sundays**

Playspace for kids with a moonbounce, train table from the Rail Yard and chalkboard. Kids' buffet (\$6.95) includes noodles with cheese, chicken fingers, corn dogs, apples, carrot sticks, juice boxes, rolls, goldfish and hoodsies. Adult food is standard pub fair. **Watch City Brewery, 256 Moody St, Waltham. 781-647-4000.**

**The Rail Yard, 200 Moody St, Waltham. 781-899-6344.**

### Iguana Cantina, great for lunches

Great Mexican food, drinks and atmosphere. The kids' meals (\$5.95) come with a choice of french fries, drink and ice cream all served in a hat that you can take home for dress up. Fun large talking iguana near the front door. **Iguana Cantina, 313 Moody St., Waltham. 781-891-3039**

# You Can Lead a Toddler to the Table, But ...

by Julie Rackliffe Lucey

As a newly minted Tufts' nutritionist and a brand new mom (events that took place three weeks apart), food was a big issue for me. To quell nagging concerns about using the education I was about to pay dearly for, I threw myself into the subject of infant nutrition. I made great baby food, frozen into ice cube trays for regular use. And Madeleine took to it—this kid ate everything! I felt like a complete success as I fed my 9-month-old spinach and beets, laced her barley cereal with freshly ground flax seed and searched for a tasty, sugar-free cake recipe for her first birthday.

Then she started to feed herself. As things that she ate greedily as mush took on more consistency, she started to refuse them. Even the “sure-bet organic pasta and cheese” from Bread and Circus hit the floor one day, and I received a gift I sorely needed—humility. Madeleine is now two, and I'm not sure she'll ever eat spinach or beets or even barley again. I have hope, but I've learned not to blame myself if she doesn't.

Food is a control issue. It's one of the only things, in fact, that your toddler actually has control over. You decide where they're going, what they're wearing, and when they're going to sleep (more or less). Whether or not they watch the TV or play with certain friends is under YOUR jurisdiction. It may not feel like it sometimes, but as long as you're strong enough to pick them up and put them into a car seat or a pair of pants, they do not have ultimate control. Food is another issue, and your two-year old knows it. The old cliché rings true here—you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink. You can make good, healthful foods available to your child, but you can't force them to eat. The less charged this issue is in your house, and in your mind, the more likely it is that they will eat—when they get around to it. The more attention you pay to not eating,

the more you reinforce this very behavior.

Ultimately, after your child's first birthday, his/her actual calorie needs drop significantly.\* So if your child, like mine, seems to go on a hunger strike sometime between their first and second birthdays, chances are good that you don't have to worry. Using the American Dietetic Association's Food Guide Pyramid for Young Children is a relatively simple way to plan meals that provide a good basis for nutrition. Using their template, your 2-3 year old needs 6 servings of grains; 3 servings of vegetables; 2 servings of fruits; 2 servings of milk (or an equivalent calcium source) and 2 servings of meat (or an equivalent protein source). A general guide for providing adequate portion sizes is to offer one tablespoon of each food for every year of age.

As we all know, what the government calls a serving is rather different than what appears on our plates. In the case of feeding reluctant eaters, this is good news. See the box, “How Much IS a Toddler-Sized Serving” for examples of how much protein, milk, vegetables and grains your 2-3 year old might need in a day. According to

Susan Roberts, author of *Feeding Your Child For Lifelong Health*, a good rule of thumb is to aim for one cup of mixed fruits and veggies each day, in addition to the protein, milk and grain requirements. Her book offers sample menus that feel reasonable for even the most finicky eaters, especially if you sort out what your child has taken in, nutrient-wise, on a weekly rather than a daily basis. This very effective strategy offers much-needed sanity to many moms I know.

\* Total caloric needs for each child depends upon height, weight and activity level. Try the calculator at [www.kidsnutrition.org/bodycomp/energy/energyneeds\\_calculator.htm](http://www.kidsnutrition.org/bodycomp/energy/energyneeds_calculator.htm) to find out what your child's needs are.




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## How Much IS a Toddler-sized Serving? For 2- and 3-year-olds:

### 1 ounce of protein is:

1 chicken nugget  
1 egg  
2 T peanut butter  
1/3 c beans  
1 hot dog (beef or tofu)  
1/4 c tuna  
2 slices lunch meat  
**Aim for 3.5 ounces**

### A serving of grains is:

2 graham cracker squares  
1/3 c cooked oatmeal  
2/3 slice whole grain bread  
1/2 bagel  
1/2 hamburger/hot dog bun  
1 3-inch pancake  
6 3-ring pretzels  
**Aim for 6 servings**

### A serving of vegetables is:

1/3 c coleslaw  
1/3 c potato salad  
1/4 medium cucumber  
1 1/2 broccoli spears  
1/3 c squash/sweet potato  
3 cherry tomatoes  
7 french fries  
**Aim for 3 servings**

### A serving of milk is:

1 c milk or calcium-fortified soy milk  
1 c yogurt  
2 ounces processed cheese  
1 1/2 ounces natural cheese  
1 c pudding  
1 1/2 c ice cream  
1 1/2 string cheese  
**Aim for 2 servings**

For more information on serving sizes and examples, go to [www.usda.gov/cnpp/KidsPyra/](http://www.usda.gov/cnpp/KidsPyra/) and click on the link for “Using the Food Guide Pyramid for Young Children” booklet. (For 2-3-year-olds, portions are about 2/3 the portions listed there).

# From Partnership Track to Parent

by Dawn Reddy Solowey

I traded my high-paying job as an attorney at a major law firm for a new job that pays nothing, requires me to work 24 hours a day, and offers neither vacation days nor benefits. My new boss cries easily, eats with her fingers, and has not once said thank you for my work. She's my 2-year-old daughter, Julia.

The decision to become a full-time Mom was not easy. I've always been ambitious, graduating in rapid succession from Harvard College, to Georgetown Law, to a partnership track job at one of Boston's top law firms. When I left my firm, I was six years up the nine-year partner track, and was hooked on the rush of life as a trial lawyer. I had tried my first solo case in federal court, and second-chaired others, and couldn't wait for my next chance to argue in front of a jury. I loved soaking up the wisdom of the senior partners who were counted among the best litigators in the city.

Then Julia arrived in September 2000. I took maternity leave for nine months, which I then extended to twelve. The firm was completely supportive of my leave, and would allow me to return to work part-time. When Julia was a few months old, I found good day care centers, put down deposits, and joined the waiting lists. I took comfort in the fact that many friends have successfully returned to work, and to my law firm in particular, after having children. But when push came to shove, I couldn't do it.

During my maternity leave, I fell in love with being home with Julia. Rocking her to sleep, or listening to her raucous laughter on the swings at the playground, I feel lucky to be with her. I joined in her first laugh, trailed behind as she made her first trip up the stairs, and heard the first time she said her own name. I love that we build block towers in the middle of the afternoon, and that when she wakes from her naps, it's her mother who greets her.

I've come to savor the simple routines of caring for my daughter. As a young attorney, I worked long hours, with my day arranged around billable hours and court-ordered deadlines. Constant stress was simply part of the job. Now, my days follow a toddler's natural rhythms of eating and sleeping, playtime and quiet time. Freed from my climate-controlled office, I enjoy the seasons with Julia, taking slow walks up the street while she inspects the ants, and pulling her in the sled through the snow. I take great satisfaction in having time to linger over a favorite book with her, or to help her work up the courage to go all by herself down the biggest slide at the park.

Although parenting is hard work and requires long hours, I have discovered time for the things I never had time to do before. When I was nursing during Julia's first year, I read books that had piled up on my shelves for years. I cook real dinners, and finally have time to exercise. My sister and I collected my late grandmother's recipes into a cookbook to share with my family, which I had wanted to do for years. I spend more time with my parents, who join us every Friday, and have made new friends with other first-time mothers. Since I can do errands during the week, my husband and I are able to spend weekends with Julia at the aquarium or the beach.

I realize that many parents successfully combine full-time jobs outside the home with parenting, and that the path I've chosen is not right for everyone. There are

certainly downsides. Our family income has been sliced in half, and while we are fortunate that my husband earns a good salary, we have had to adjust our spending dramatically. In this economic climate, it is definitely riskier to rely on one salary, rather than two. There are days when taking care of a cranky or defiant toddler feels infinitely harder, and more thankless, than the job I left behind.

I miss the thrill of courtroom victories, the satisfaction of completing tangible projects, and working on cases as part of a team. Had I remained at the firm, I would have been up for partner this year. There are times when I feel a twinge of envy when I talk to friends who stayed on, and are nervous and excited about the upcoming partnership vote, and all that it means for their careers. Sometimes I miss the simple pleasures of driving to work without having to listen to Sesame Street Platinum, or eating a peaceful lunch with a coworker who doesn't complain that her sandwich was cut wrong, or that she doesn't like seeds in her yogurt.

On the other hand, many of the drawbacks I feared have not materialized. One partner at my firm told me that I'd never make it through a nine-month maternity leave because I'd get bored of "changing diapers." His warning echoed my fear that the routine of caring for a baby would be monotonous, and that I would suffer from lack of intellectual stimulation. Instead, I find raising my daughter to be highly engaging and rarely boring. While I had feared that being a stay-at-home Mom might be isolating, I have found instead that we are always busy meeting friends to splash in the backyard baby pool, or to visit the new baby pigs at the local farm. Also, thanks to a high-speed Internet connection, I have also been able to keep one hand in the legal field from home, writing for a legal publication and working on occasional projects for my firm while my daughter naps.

I suspect that my decision to stay home with Julia was influenced by the fact that my own mother was home with my sister and me in our early years, just as my grandmother had been with her. Every day, my mother would be standing in the doorway as we walked up the street from school, waiting to offer us a snack and to listen to our stories. Yet we never doubted that she was smart and successful in her own right – when we were older, she returned to school to earn her Ph.D. In that same spirit, I hope to be home with my family now, and then refocus on my legal career when my kids are older.

There are times when I have my doubts about whether I'm doing the right thing. Recently, to mark my ten-year college reunion, I received a book in which the members of my college class had chronicled their achievements over the last decade. Reading about the high-powered accomplishments of my classmates, I wondered for a moment whether being "just" a mother measured up.

But when I wake up each morning, I look forward to spending the day with Julia. I'm happier than I can remember being. Her early years will pass quickly, as these first two and a half have already, and I am grateful not to miss a moment.

*This article appears courtesy of [www.iParenting.com](http://www.iParenting.com).*

# Calendar

## Sing-alongs

**Tuesdays** Robbins Library: 10-10:30am. Songs and singing games for ages 0-3. Space limited, tickets are distributed beginning 9am day of event. Call 781-316-3234 or visit [www.robbinslibrary.org](http://www.robbinslibrary.org).

### First Thursday of the month

Sing-along at Fox Library, 10 am. For Preschool children of all ages with Liz Buchanan.

**First Friday of each month** Fox Library infant & toddler sing. Songs and singing games for ages 0-3. Call for details 781-316-3198.

**Second and fourth Friday of each month** Sing-along with Diane Taraz. 10-10:30am, Calvary United Methodist Church, 300 Mass Ave, \$1. Info: [www.dianetaraz.com](http://www.dianetaraz.com).

## Storytimes

**Mondays** Toddlers at Robbins, 10:30-11:30am. Drop in, children ages 18 mo to 3 yrs with an adult. Stories, rhymes and fingerplays for first 15 mins, followed by play, a simple craft, and socializing.

**Tuesdays** Storytime at Fox Ages 2 1/2 - 3 at 10am  
Ages 4-5 at 10:30am  
Call 781-316-3198 to sign up in advance.

**Wednesdays** Preschoolers at Robbins, 10:30-11am. Drop-in, ages 3-5 with an adult or alone, but adult must remain close by in the library. Longer stories, rhymes, games and fingerplays followed by book checkout!

**Thursdays** Lap-sit program at Fox Infants to age 2 1/2 at 10am, drop-in. \*NOT held on the first Thursday of the month.

## Groups

### Baby Talk Drop-in Group

Tuesdays, 10:15-11:30am. Teen Room at the Boys & Girls Club. Ages 0-1. \$3 A new way for infants and caregivers to socialize and play. Info: [lynnhorgan@comcast.net](mailto:lynnhorgan@comcast.net)

### Puddlestompers Monday Playgroup

Drop-in preschool playgroup meets Mondays from 10:30am-12:30pm. We'll take advantage of the glorious outdoors for as long as possible, meeting at various playgrounds and planning group field trips. We'll move indoors for the winter to the Fox Library Community Room (\$1/ family contribution for use of the room.) To join the group's email list, contact: [julielukey@comcast.net](mailto:julielukey@comcast.net) or call 781-641-0944.

### New Mothers' Drop-in Group

Thursdays, 10-11:30am, Calvary United Methodist Church, 300 Mass Ave. Free, nonsectarian, facilitated group. All new parents are welcome with their babies. Sponsored by Jewish Family and Children's Services. Info: 617-558-1278.

### New Mothers' Drop-in Group

Alternating Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30am, Henry Bear's Park, 685 Mass Ave. Free, informal drop-in group for new mothers with infants. Info: 781-646-9400.

### Grandparents Support Group

Meets second Thursday of the month from 12-1:30pm for grandparents providing primary childcare for their grandchildren. Sponsored by the Arlington Youth Consultation Center. Call 781-316-3250 for details and to pre-register.

### Arlington Fathers' Group

Tuesdays 7:30-9pm. Sponsored by Parents Helping Parents. Free support group for fathers who are feeling isolated, overwhelmed, or concerned about their anger toward their children. For location and information, call 800-882-1250.

## Other Fun Stuff

**Toddlers and Twos** Drop-in gym time. Wednesdays and Fridays 9:30-11am. Gibbs School gym. Ages 15 mos.-3 years \$3 per day. Info: 781-316-3880.

### Art Beat Drop-in Studio Art Time

Children 4 and up. Project prices start at \$8. 212-A Mass Ave. Monday-Friday, 10am-5pm. Info: 781-646-2200.

**Capitol Theater Movies** for caregivers with babies. Movies chosen weekly. Showtimes start Mondays between 1-2pm. \$4.50. To join the email list, contact Sarah Bosley at [sbosley@rcn.com](mailto:sbosley@rcn.com).

**Full Moon Restaurant** Monday night is movie night, kids can come in pajamas. 5-8pm. Preschool-oriented kids' movies in the play area. 138 Mass Ave. 781- 646-1404.

**Family Literacy Workshops** Robbins Library. Saturdays, through Nov. 15, from 9:30-11:30am. Topics include: Foundations for Literacy, Reading at Home, Books for Children and Writing at Home. Space is limited. Call 781-316-3234 to register. Recommended for parent with child in kindergarten or first grade.

**Public Skating** 422 Summer Street. \$2 children, \$4 adults. Fridays: 11am-1pm, 2:30-4:45pm, 7-9pm. Sundays: 9:30-11:30 am, 2-4pm. Info: 781- 316-3880.

**Regent Theatre** offers great family programs most Saturday mornings from 10:30-11:30am. \$5 for kids & seniors, \$7 adults. Tickets available at the door

starting at 9:30am, or in advance the week before at Henry Bear's Park.

Nov 1: Peter Gross/Special Halloween Show with Costume Contest.

Nov. 8: Steve's Songs

Nov. 15: The Jim Show

Nov. 22: Gunnar Madsen (The Bobs)

Nov. 23: Family Folk Chorale at 3pm.

Visit [www.regenttheatre.com](http://www.regenttheatre.com) for more details.

## Beyond Arlington

**New Mothers' Group** Wednesdays, 10-11:30am, Beth Israel Deaconess & Children's Hospital Medical Care Center, 482 Bedford Street, Lexington. 617-667-2229.

**Jimmy Tingle Theatre** in Davis Square has kids programs Saturday mornings through Dec. 6 from 10-11. Call 617-591-1616 or [www.yamass.org/artsforkidsake.htm](http://www.yamass.org/artsforkidsake.htm).

**Babes in The Woods** strolls and hikes through the Medford Fells every Tuesday, 10-11:30am. Call 781-396-8994 for maps and info.

**Belmont KidSpace** reopens Nov. 8 9am-noon. This indoor playspace is available for ages 5 and under. \$45 season pass or \$3 a day. 365 Belmont Street, Belmont. Hours usually: M/Th 1-5pm; Fri 5-8pm; Sat 9am-12noon; 2nd & 4th Sundays (not 11/9) 2-5pm; 3rd Sunday 2-5 pm (for special families). For more information check 617-484-7703 or [www.belmontkidspace.org](http://www.belmontkidspace.org).

**Barefoot Books** 1771 Mass Ave., Cambridge is a dreamy setting for regular storytimes and special readings and events. (617) 349-1610 or [www.barefootbooks.com](http://www.barefootbooks.com).

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Please send your December event listings by Nov. 17 to [calendar@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](mailto:calendar@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org).

## Special Needs Screenings for Children Ages 3-5

The PreschoolTeam provides screening, evaluation and services to Arlington families whose 3-5 year-old children have suspected or identified special needs. The next screening date is Dec. 2.

Parents who think their child (birth dates 9/98 to 12/00) may have a special need or developmental problem may call Kathleen Fraser at 781-316-3728 to see whether a screening should be scheduled.

# Arlington's Early Childhood Options

(continued from page 1)

Wendy was volunteering at the event and I would tag along to get all of the pertinent info, and maybe more importantly, to find out what was really pertinent.

I made the first tough choice and attended despite the coincidence with the Red Sox battling in the Divisional Playoffs. From there the rest was easy.

Representatives from most of the childcare programs in Arlington had gathered in the Senior Center. Arlington is blessed with a great number of daycare possibilities—great for everyone, yet more difficult for those of us who are decision-challenged. Surprisingly, the opportunity for side-by-side comparison and face-to-face discussion all at one location made for intimate rather than superficial encounters with the many care providers.

The dedication of Arlington's childcare workers was a constant amongst the throng. Whether young in their careers or having decades of experience, they all cut through the multitude of questions and details that every parent must face and centered on finding the best possible nurturing atmosphere for the child you will be entrusting to them. Discovering that perfect fit is up to the people who understand that growing individual the best—the parents—but they should rely on the experience and guidance of childcare professionals to at least set them on the right path.

The Arlington community is an international community that prides itself on its diversity. Its childcare programs reflect that diversity. There are options available for all schedules and financial situations. Bilingual and special needs concerns can be addressed. Special interests and talents may be fostered.

As most of the providers themselves were quick to point out, this exercise could help to narrow the field of possibilities, but in the end parents need to see and feel the actual facilities. But even on a visit to a prospective

daycare program, one must remain focused on what really matters. Says Barbara O'Neal, Educational Director of Arlington Children's Center, "The state of the art classrooms, façade and equipment are not what you should be looking for. The teachers should have the ability and training where they can sit down in a garage with a bunch of pebbles and teach."

That pretty much bottom-lines it. But O'Neal wants to make sure she is understood--that "teaching" implies something bigger than just exposing children to fundamentals. Grasping those fundamentals is a step toward greater confidence in both further learning and life itself. "Teach kids to believe in their own ability and their own power to deal with adversity and they will succeed and be fine." If that is the goal of the childcare we ultimately choose, that sounds like a great place to start.

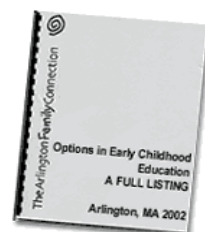
## GET THE BOOK!

AFC's *Options in Early Childhood Education* book is NOW ON SALE!

The book contains a full listing of preschools, daycare centers, and other childcare options in Arlington.

Price: \$6.50 AFC Members  
\$7.50 Non-members  
(price includes postage).

Contact Dianna Dixon at  
events@arlingtonfamily  
connection.org for your copy.



## AFC Membership/Renewal Form



New Member  Renewal  Date:

**Names:**

**Address, Zip:**

**E-mail:**

**Phone:**

**Please list your children:**

Name Gender Date of Birth

**I am a:**

Parent  Grandparent  Health Care Provider  
 Educator  Child Care Provider  Other

**I am:**

Stay-at-home Parent  Employed full-time  
 Employed Part-time  Other

**Newsletter Delivery Preference:**

US Mail  E-mail  Both

**School District** (for geographic location):

Bishop  Brackett  Dallin  Hardy

Peirce  Stratton  Thompson  Other

**Areas of Interest:**

Events/Parties  New Parent Outreach  Newsletter

Outings w/ Kids  Outings w/o Kids  Seminars

Playgroups  Web site  Other:

**Membership Fees:** All memberships renew in September.

One-year membership \$20 (joining July-January)

Mid-year membership \$10 (joining Feb-June)

Please make check payable to "Arlington Family Connection" and mail it with this form to:

Arlington Family Connection, PO Box 150, Arlington, MA 02476

For information or questions, contact Ruth Schmidt at (781) 643-2362 or membership@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org

# Save the Dates!

## Wednesday, Nov. 5

**AFC Steering Committee Meeting**  
8pm. Join other AFC members to plan and organize future events, outings and discussion topics. Meetings open to all. Contact [info@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](mailto:info@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org) or call a Steering Committee Member (p. 2) for location.

## Thursday, Nov. 6

**LPPTA Seminar: Creating Family Rituals, 7:30-9 pm, Buckman Tavern, Lexington.** Why children need family rituals and ideas about creating new traditions and nurturing old ones. Speaker Eve Berne is a child development consultant and parent educator. \$10, paid in advance. Contact Suzie Byers at 781-863-5863 or [suzie\\_byers@hotmail.com](mailto:suzie_byers@hotmail.com).

## Thursday, Nov. 6

**AFC Book Club**  
Meets the first Thursday of every month. New members always welcome. Info: Nancy Flynn-Barvick at [barvick@comcast.net](mailto:barvick@comcast.net).

## Saturday, Nov. 8

**SteveSongs Concert**  
10:30am at the Regent Theatre, 7 Medford Street in Arlington Center. It's AFC Day at the Regent, so please come and show your support. For information call 781-643-4488.

## VETERAN'S DAY

## Tuesday, Nov. 11

**AFC Guided Walk at Habitat**  
10-11:30 am, Habitat Education Center, 10 Juniper Rd., Belmont. Discover a hidden gem only 5-10 minutes from where you live in Arlington! Guides will lead a walk around the grounds of this Audubon sanctuary and former estate, while entertaining the children with fun songs and games about the fields, woods and pond and the creatures that inhabit them. \$5 per person, ages under 2 free. (Younger children are welcome in backpacks. Working parents who have the day off are especially invited to come, as are

school-age children.) RSVP with number of people attending and ages of kids to Ruth by Tuesday, Nov. 4. ([outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](mailto:outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org) or 781-643-2362). Outing will happen rain or shine, but may be cancelled or rescheduled in the event of severe weather.

## Member Outreach

Help create a database for AFC to use to reach out to soon-to-be parents and new parents. Jeff Drake, AFC member and parent educator is offering a free program through AFC the third week in January called *The Three Keys Parents Need for Successful Discipline*. He is looking for help generating a list of OB/GYNs, pediatricians, midwives, birthing coaches, Lamaze teachers, hospitals, La Leche League leaders, pregnancy and infant massage providers. If you can help out please contact Jeff at 781-863-1023 or at [jeff@successfulparents.com](mailto:jeff@successfulparents.com).

Arlington Family Connection  
PO Box 150  
Arlington, MA 02476

## Still Haven't Renewed?

*This may be your last newsletter!  
All AFC membership renewals were due in September. Please mail in the form on page 7 ASAP. Thanks!*