

Arlington Family Connection

Supporting children ages six and under and those who care for them



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www.arlingtonfamilyconnection.org



Not Too Early to Support Arlington Teachers

By Kathleen Iglesias

A yellow flyer showed up on my doorstep one-day reading “Top 10 Reasons Arlington Teachers Need a Fair Contract Now!” sent out by Virginia Fuller, president of the Arlington Education Association. I have a 20-month-old daughter and a 3-year-old son, so both my children still have a couple of years before they enroll in Arlington public schools, but I know the issues of today will affect the schools for years to come. The time for me to get educated and involved is now.

Reading the flyer, I learned that Arlington teacher contracts expired back in August 2003. Since that time, teachers have been working without a contract and have not received any cost-of-living increases. I was also dismayed to learn that Arlington teacher salaries are not competitive with neighboring towns. With the ever-increasing cost of living in the Boston area, it’s not surprising — but still distressing — that our town’s most talented teachers are leaving for better paying jobs elsewhere. I called Virginia Fuller to ask how I — and other concerned parents

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Support for Breastfeeding Changes Policy at Gold’s Gym

By Betsy Lawson

My heartfelt thanks go out to all who voiced their support for ‘Nursing in the Nursery’ and have changed the breastfeeding policy at Gold’s Gym. There is now a partitioned area in back of the childcare room where moms can breastfeed their babies — no more schlepping across the gym with a crying baby and 3-year-old in tow, for me, to get to one of the tanning rooms previously set aside for nursing moms.

I found the management at Gold’s respectful in listening to my point of view, but at the time I was asked to leave the nursery to nurse (back in January/February), the owners simply felt that more parents were against nursing in the nursery than there were proponents. Since publishing the article in this newsletter in March, however, many individual gym members (and potential members) have spoken up in support of nursing in the nursery and a compromise was found — the partition.

Would I rather be able to nurse my baby smack-dab in the middle of the nursery like it was no big deal? Yes. I’m a proponent of breastfeeding and am comfortable

nursing my baby whenever he is hungry or needs comfort.

Will I respect the partition and nurse behind it with my preschooler free to wander in and out as is her fancy? Yes. I respect that other parents may not be comfortable with their children (some of whom are of elementary school age within Gold’s childcare room) seeing a baby nurse.

I believe we can only run into trouble when we tell others how to parent or what is best for other people’s

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News from the AFC Steering Committee

AFC Volunteers Needed for...

...AFC outings

We need fun-loving members to help organize and lead outings both with and without children. Any commitment from one outing to many would be appreciated! We also welcome suggestions for future activities and trips.

...Kindergarten Connections contacts

If you have a child starting kindergarten in the fall and are interested in meeting other families in your school district (or chosen private school) this summer, please consider being the contact person for your school. The job has traditionally involved organizing "meet at the playground" events for families, but it is not limited to that - do whatever you are interested in! If you would like to help other families to meet one another, please volunteer.

For the above two items, please contact Ruth at outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org or 781-643-2362.

AFC Workshop Ideas?

AFC Seminar topics are generated by our membership and we want to hear from you! Previous seminars have included *Raising a Healthy and Happy Only Child*; *Coping with Food Allergies*; *Parenting — for Dads*; and more.

One recent suggestion has been about car seat safety checks: perhaps AFC could get a police officer or other expert to come and talk about keeping children safe in cars and in the home. It could include a car seat installation safety inspection. Would members be interested? Other suggestions? Contact: info@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org.

AFC Website Updated

AFC is proud to announce some recent updates and additions to its website: www.arlingtonfamilyconnection.org. Highlights include a redesigned homepage and prominently featured upcoming events. In addition, check out the ever-expanding resources section and newsletter archives.

As always, we welcome your feedback. To make comments or contributions to the website, contact webmaster@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org.

Editor's Note: Many thanks to webmaster Karen Donovan who has generously given her time and talent to keep AFC fresh online.



AFC Board Book Drive

Spring is here — time to clean out those closets! In the spirit of spring cleaning, the Community Service Committee of AFC is sponsoring a board/picture book drive the first two weeks of April.

If you have any "gently-used" children's books that are no longer necessities in your home, please consider donating them to any of the collection boxes that will be set up around town. All donated books will be divided among the following worthy recipients: Toddlers and Twos at the Gibbs Gym, Puddlestompers at Fox Library, The Robbins and Fox libraries, Menotomy Preschool and the Cradles to Crayons organization (visit: cradlestocrayons.org).

Drop-off boxes will be located at the following locations from April 3-18: Carberry's, Pink Dolly, The Book Rack, Three Lil' Birds and the Fox Library.

For more information or to learn more about AFC's Community Service Committee, contact Debra Reardon at (781) 643-2081 or dreardon@rcn.com.

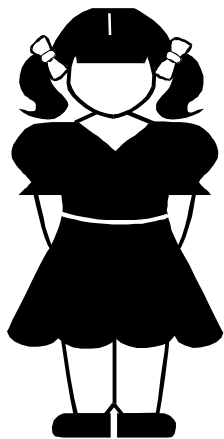
Notes from AFC Membership

* If you move out of the Arlington area, don't just cancel your membership - you can easily arrange to gift the remaining months to a local, non-member friend!

* We also wish to remind you that if your email address changes or if you move, to please send us an update promptly. Contact: membership@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org, or call Ruth at 781-643-2362.

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. Copyright remains with the individual author for bylined articles. All other materials are copyright Arlington Family Connection, 2004. Permission is granted to reproduce articles for which copyright is held by AFC provided appropriate credit is given and no fee is charged. The AFC newsletter accepts submissions from AFC members on issues relevant to families with children six and under. The editorial board reserved the right to refuse submissions for any reason. Send editorial submissions to: newsletter@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org; calendar listings to calendar@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org.



A Letter to My New Neighbors ...

Dear Fellow Arlington Residents,

Hello. Let me introduce you to myself. My name is Lea Yuwen Michel. I am a new resident not only to Arlington but also to the United States. I have been here for only a few months, and what an event-filled few months it has been! My whole world has changed since just a few months ago. I have now become familiar with Trader Joe's, the bike path, and bus #67. This new world of Arlington, Massachusetts is so completely different from my home country and environment.

You see, I am only 19 months old and have a new mama and papa. They came to pick me up about 7 months ago when the situation in China was quite precarious. I am from Hunan, China, where the food is hot and spicy. I guess that's why my mama calls me her "spicy girl"!

Since food is very important in Chinese culture, many Chinese people say that the type of food from a certain area in China tells you a lot about the people there. I guess this means that my parents will have their work cut out for them! Anyhow, the food I get now is also rather tasty, I must admit. Oh, how I've come to love cheese and yogurt and ice cream! However, I do miss the glutinous rice and fried eggs from the orphanage where I lived for the first year of my life.

One of my favorite things about my new home is all the toys and books that are just for me. At the orphanage there was only a small bucket of toys that 18 babies had to share in the playroom. Now, I probably have 10 times that! And my mama and papa do anything I want them to...well, almost anything. Sometimes I hear them call me, "Princess Lea". Humm...I'm not sure why, but I think it has something to do with this.

And the people I see here also look so different. Even my parents seem rather big and have such angular faces. It was quite scary at first, but now I'm used to them. They really are very nice, despite their large noses. But when my mama takes me out shopping or walking along the bike path, I sometimes see people who look like me. And it's very exciting. In fact, it's amazing to see so many people who look very different from one another. At the orphanage, I only saw other babies who looked and cried like me... and a few nannies, of course. Here in Arlington, I see short people, I see tall people, I see young people, I see old people, I see light-skinned people, I see dark-skinned people, I see curly-haired people, and I see straight-haired people. But everyone, no matter how they look, has been so nice to me.

Yes, this is a different world! But slowly I'm getting used to it and learning so much along the way. I can honestly say... I'm glad I'm growing up in Arlington, Massachusetts!

Sincerely,
Lea Yuwen Michel

Lea would enjoy hearing from other adopted kids about their experiences. She can be reached at sandjmichel@netscape.net.

Gold's Gym New Nursing Area

(Continued from page 1)

children. Breastfeeding is right for my family; it may not, for whatever reason, be right for someone else's family. Here's the analogy I used when describing the Gold's nursing situation to friends:

I *seriously* don't like some of the children's videos that are played at Gold's Gym nursery. I would not have those videos on in my house and I would not just leave a television/video machine running all the time. But, again, Gold's Gym isn't my living room. It's a choice on my part to bring my children there, and I cannot pretend to have the same control over things there as I would in my own home. I thought about it and made a trade off -- a little junk TV in trade for a workout. Okay.

If the nursery were playing porn videos for the kids, I

would certainly speak up and demand a change-- but that's an extreme example and certainly not the case at Gold's. What I consider an inappropriate cartoon for my kids may be your family's favorite. Or vice versa. We have to live in a world of compromise and acceptance. There's no one right way to raise a child (or if there is, I certainly haven't been let in on the secret).

So, in all, there's good and bad for me now at Gold's. The good news: I've reinstated my membership and I appreciate the management's flexibility and understanding in not charging me penalties to rejoin. Now that I'm a member again, I have to fight the ever-present *mommy-fatigue* and actually go work out. I know how good it is for me and my post-pregnancy body in the long run, but in the short run, a nap seems more fun!

Betsy Lawson is a freelance writer and mother of two living in Arlington Heights and one of the editors of this newsletter. She welcomes your feedback at newsletter@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org

Less TV, More Fun

By Melissa Lucius

We don't have a television and have never had one in our home. In fact, When my husband and I met, neither of us had one — and we've just never gotten one. We're a pretty normal family otherwise: we have a microwave, a computer, and a cell phone, but no television.

People ask me, "*How can you survive without a TV?*"

My answer is that we've never had one, and therefore we don't miss it. My question back is, "who has time to watch TV when you have kids?" There are already not enough hours in the day for reading, playing outside, doing art projects, going on outings with friends... not to mention the everyday stuff like meals, getting dressed and sleeping.

I'd like to propose watching less television, and instead, having more fun and quality family time.

You already know the bad stuff, because we hear it all the time: when kids watch television, they're not interacting with other human beings or getting fresh air or using their imagination or creativity. Some shows promote questionable values, and of course we can all do without the commercials. Also, too much TV has been linked to obesity and violent behavior — of course, this is the extreme, when kids are logging several hours a day in front of the tube.

There's a big difference between a) letting your kid watch TV for as many hours as they like, during which time they ingest all those ads and questionable values, and b) choosing high-quality programs that you watch together and discuss afterwards, like a half hour PBS special about turtles. The first uses the television as a babysitter, and the second creates a special occasion-like family activity that can be enriching and fun.

Yes, I've heard that television is great when you need a

half an hour to cook dinner or pay the bills. Your kids are quiet and you can get done what you need to get done.

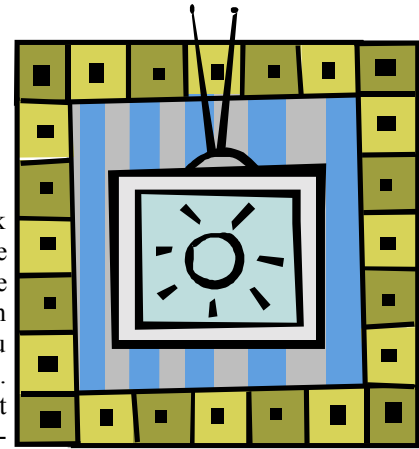
What heaven! But what about cultivating their talent for playing on their own? Even kids as young as 2 or 3 can occupy themselves for long periods by looking at books, playing with toys, and listening to story tapes and music.

With just a little forethought, you can spend the television time doing something fun and family-oriented. Just yesterday, we played a rousing game of chase/hide and seek. My older daughter also loves scavenger hunts and "the feely game" (where we put an object in a box, cover it with a towel, then she has to reach in and figure out what it is without looking). Go outside and blow bubbles or read a book on the porch. Or just get a good kid's encyclopedia (one with all kinds of good pictures), and ask, "so, what would you like to learn about today?"

The truth is that habits are *really* hard to change. I know I'm resistant to changing things I've been doing for years and years. But our kids are still young and malleable, and it's so much easier to establish good habits for them now, than change bad habits later. Even if you just spend one less half an hour channel surfing this week, it will make a positive difference. Let's hear it for family fun!

Melissa Lucius has 2 daughters and is a project manager at a software consulting company. Please send any feedback you have to mrlucius@netzero.net.

Editor's Note: National TV Turn-Off Week is April 19-25. Check out www.tvturnoff.org



Show Your Support for Arlington Teachers

(Continued from page 1)

of preschoolers —can show support for Arlington's teachers. She recommended sending our concerns to the school committee members, as listed below.

Barbara Goodman barbgood@yahoo.com
Joani La Machia Jlamachia30@comcast.net
Suzanne Owayda suzowayda@comcast.net
Paul Schlichtman paul@schlichtman.org

Susan Sheffler ssheffler@aol.com
Jeff Thielman jthielman@rcn.com
Martin Thrope Mjt47@peshe.org

There's no question that our teachers have been working hard. Arlington's MCAS scores and SAT statistics reflect that. I want Arlington to be a good school district for today's kids as well as tomorrow's. Keeping our teachers keeps Arlington's schools strong. Let's work together *now* to show support for a *fair contract*!

Calendar

Compiled by Lillian Johnson and Amy Speare

Special Events for Families

Sunshine Nursery Children's Fair **Sat. April 3, 10am-1pm**

Sunshine Nursery School, 630 Mass. Ave, Arlington Center (Unitarian Church Building). Raffles, games, food, arts & crafts, and more. Free. Including 11-11:45am, **Magic show by Bonaparte**, Boston's hottest magician! \$1/person. Info: 781-646-1630.

Etienne (comedy, stunts)

Sat. April 3, 10:30-11:30am

Regent Theatre Family Fun Series, 7 Medford St., Arlington. \$5/kids & seniors, \$7/adults. Tickets available at the door starting at 9:30am, or in advance the week before at Henry Bear's Park. Info 781-646-4849. www.regenttheatre.com/events/family_fun.htm

WCRB Classical Cartoon Festival

Sat. April 3, 10am-4pm

Symphony Hall, 301 Mass. Ave., Boston. Music, magic, storytelling, clown, tours, instrument petting zoo, and classic Warner Bros. Cartoons on the big screen. Tip: arrive early and take the T! Tickets \$6 at BSO box office or call 617-266-1200. <http://140.239.61.3/cartoonfestival.htm>

A Musical Concert and Fun Fair **Sun. April 4 12:30pm pre-concert activities; 1:30pm concert.**

Part of the New Philharmonia Family Discovery series. After concert — the New Phil Instrument Petting Zoo. orenson Center at Babson College, 231 Forest St., Wellesley. \$14/adults, \$8/students. Info: 617-527-9717. www.newphil.org/index.htm

Tot Spring Party

Wed. April 7, 10:30-11:30am

Boys and Girls Club, 60 Pond Lane, Arlington. Event will feature a sing-along, age-appropriate arts and crafts, and pictures with Spring Bunny. Info: 781-648-1617.

Annual Spring Egg Hunt.

Sat. April 10, 9:45am

Boys and Girls Club, 60 Pond Lane, Arlington. *Note: for ages 5-11.* Info: 781-648-1617.

Spring Egg Hunt.

Sat. April 10, 11am

Gibbs School on Tufts St. For all ages.

Sponsored by the Arlington Rec. Dept. Collect candy, take pictures and have fun! Advance tickets at the Recreation Office (422 Summer St.) or at the door for \$4. Info: 781-316-3880.

Visit with a Menotomy Minuteman

Sat. April 10, 2-2:30pm

Robbins Library. Paul Hogman talks about the life and times of a Minuteman. Also, try your hand at "quilling," the colonial art of paper scrollwork. *Note: for ages 5+.* Info: 781-316-3234, www.robbinslibrary.org

Patriots Day Parade

Mon. April 19, 9:15 am.

Menotomy Minutemen lead a Grand Parade from St. James Church (corner of Mass. Ave. & Appleton St.) in the Heights to Walgreens (324 Mass. Ave.) in East Arlington. *Note: While this is a fun, spirited, community event, it can be quite loud for very young children.*

Kite Day

Sat. April 24, 9am-1pm

Robbins Farm Park, Eastern Ave. (across from the Brackett School), Arlington. Don McCasland of "Kite Over New England" will be on hand to help out. Info: www.robbinsfarmpark.org

Annual Sheepshearing Festival

Sat. April 24, 10am-4pm (rain/shine)

Gore Place, 52 Gore St., Waltham. Demonstrations of sheep shearing, herding dogs, spinning, weaving, lacemaking, and wool-dyeing. Crafts fair, wagon rides, live music, Morris Dancers, puppeteer, farm animals, and more. \$8 adults & teens; \$6 seniors; children 12 & under free. 781-894-2798. www.goreplace.org/events/sheepshearing2004.htm

SteveSongs Concert

Sun. April 25, 3pm

Belmont KidSpace, Payson Park Church, 365 Belmont St., Belmont. Tickets \$7, maximum \$20/family. Info: 617-484-8697 or www.belmontkidspace.org

Alice in Wonderland

Fri. April 30, 7:30pm

Sat. May 1, 2pm

Production of the Arlington Children's Theatre. First Baptist Church, 819 Mass. Ave. All ages. Admission \$5. <http://act.arlington.ma.us/>

Feathered Friends Family Festival

Sat. May 8, 1-5pm

Harvard Museum of Natural History, 26 Oxford Street, Cambridge. Celebrate the amazing diversity of birds through displays, demonstrations, and activities for the whole family. Try your hand at some bird crafts to take home and meet some live birds in special "Creature Feature" presentations. \$7.50/adults, \$5/children. Info: (617) 495-3045. www.hmn.harvard.edu

Vacation Week Activities

(April 17-23)

Robbins Library

Sat. Apr. 17, "Trick or Dream Magic Show" with Eran Yaniv. 11-11:45am, for ages 4-7. Limited space, tickets given out starting Apr. 14 at Robbins.

Mon. Apr. 19, CLOSED

Tues. Apr. 20, Playtime for little ones.

Wed. Apr. 21, Crafts.

Thurs. Apr. 22, Games Night.

781-316-3234, www.robbinslibrary.org

Fox Library

Wed., April 21, "A British Soldier" visits in his 18th century "redcoat" costume to talk about his life and times. Colonial craft follows. 4-5pm, for all ages.

781-316-3198, www.robbinslibrary.org

National Heritage Museum

33 Marrett Rd., Lexington.

Mon. Apr. 19, Make mobcaps and tricorn hats, play with colonial toys and games. 10am-2pm, free.

Wed. Apr. 21, Play classic board games and visit "Made in MA" to see locally made toys and games. 10am-4pm, free. 781-861-6559, www.monh.org

Arlington Center for the Arts *Fantastic Fables* April 19-23. Kids ages 5-11

are invited into a land of fantastic fables. Using clay, paint, drama, and more, kids will explore literature and be inspired by the characters and themes of fantastic stories. Students will paint, draw, sculpt in clay, and develop a drama skit for the week. Full Day: 8:45am-3:30pm; \$230 member, \$250 nonmember. Extended day option available. 781-648-6220, www.acarts.org

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Habitat Kindercamp

April 20 – 23, Habitat Audubon Sanctuary, 10 Juniper Road, Belmont. Ages 5-6. Daily 9am-12pm. This camp will focus on signs of spring, cycles, insects, gardening and the vernal pool. \$120/member, \$145/nonmember. Info: 617-489-5050.

Sing-alongs

Mondays. *Finagle a Bagel* in Burlington, 91 Middlesex Turnpike, 5:30-6:30pm. Ed Morgan performs a selection of fun original and classic children's songs. Free. 781-273-6500, www.finagleabagel.com

Tuesdays, 10-10:30 am.

April 6 & 13 at FOX
April 27 at ROBBINS

Songs and singing games for ages 0-3 with Liz Buchanan or Sulinha. Space limited, tickets are distributed beginning 9am day of event.

Second and fourth Friday of the month

Sing-along with Diane Taraz. 10-10:30am, Calvary United Methodist Church, 300 Mass Ave, \$1. Info: www.dianetaraz.com

Storytimes

Mondays, April 5 & 12

Toddlers at Robbins Library, 10:30-11:30am. Drop-in for 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. Info: 781-316-3234.

Tuesdays, April 6 & 13

Drop-in stories & craft at Fox Library for 3-5 yr. olds at 10am. Info: 781-316-3198.

Wednesdays, April 7, 14 & 21

Preschoolers at Robbins Library, 10:30-11am. Drop-in for ages 3-5 with an adult or alone, but adult must remain close by in the library. Longer stories, rhymes,

games and fingerplays.

Thursdays, April 1, 8 & 15

Lap-sit program at Fox Library, 10am. Drop-in for babies and up to age 2 ½ with an adult. A brief story and lap game followed by play and socializing.

Thursdays

Henry Bear's Park, 11am, Free. 685 Mass Ave., Arlington. Info: 781-646-9400.

Thursday, April 15, 10:30am

National Heritage Museum, 33 Marrett Rd., Lexington. Celebrate Patriot's Day by reading "Yankee Doodle" by Steven Kellogg, then make a cap to stick your own feathers on. Ages 4 & under, \$3/child. 781-861-6559, www.monh.org

Other Fun Stuff

Toddlers and Twos

Drop-in, indoor gym time sponsored by the Arlington Recreation Dept. Wed. and Fri. 9:30-11am., Gibbs School gym. Ages 15 mos.-3 yrs, \$3/day. Info: 781-316-3880.

*Note that in May, we will meet only Wed. 10-11:30 am at local playgrounds: May 5 – Summer St. playground at the Sports Center.

Arlington Children's Theater

Discovery Theatre Sessions for the Young Artist, choice of two sessions lasting four Saturdays beginning April 3 and May 8, 9:30-10:15am. Ages 4-5. Children sing in different languages, act out musical stories, and discover their own unique talents. \$40. <http://act.arlington.ma.us/workshops.html>

Parent and Tot Connection

Arlington Boys and Girls Club, Fridays 9:30-11am. Drop-in playgroup for toddlers and preschoolers with caregiver. Consists of age-appropriate play activities, crafts, stories and music. Free, supported by a grant to Community Partnerships for Children. Info: 781-648-1617.

Puddlestompers Monday Playgroup

Drop-in preschool playgroup, 10:30am-12:30pm. Meets in the Fox Library Community Room in the winter (\$1/ family contribution for use of room); and outside when the weather is nice. To join group's email list, contact JulieLucey@

comcast.net or call 781-641-0944.

Art Beat Weekend Workshops

Drop in Sat. 3-5pm to do a different themed craft each week. For ages 4 and up, prices \$10 and up. 212-A Mass Ave., Arlington. Info: 781-646-2200 or www.artbeatonline.com/workshops.htm

Capitol Theater Movies for caregivers with babies

Mondays, new movie chosen weekly starting between 1-2pm, \$4.50/ adult. Nursing, bottle feeding, fussing, and changing diapers is strongly encouraged and never frowned upon! 204 Mass Ave., Arlington. To join the email list send an email to BabyFriendlyMovies-subscribe@yahoogroups.com; Visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BabyFriendlyMovies>

Full Moon Restaurant

Monday Movie Nights, 5-8pm
Kids can come in pajamas. Preschool-oriented kids' movies in the play area. 138 Mass Ave., 781-646-1404.

Beyond Arlington

Babes in the Woods

Strolls and hikes through the Medford Fells every Tuesday, 10-11:30am. Free. For maps, schedules or info call 781-396-8994 or visit www.fells.org/babes.html.

Belmont KidSpace

Indoor playspace for ages 5 and under. \$30 family season pass (thru May) or \$3/day. 365 Belmont St, Belmont. Hours: Mon & Thurs 1-5pm; Fri 5-8pm; Sat 9am-12pm; 2nd & 4th Sundays 2-5pm; 3rd Sunday 2-5pm for special-needs families. For info call 617-484-8697 or visit www.belmontkidspace.org.

SHIP AHOY Sat. Morning Theatre – Cinderella. Sat. April 3, 10:30am, Concord Youth Theatre, 40 Stow St., Concord. For ages 3 & up, tickets \$5 at door. Concord Youth Theatre actors will inspire you with their new and improved versions of familiar children's stories, complete with ample opportunities for audience participation. Info: 978-371-1482. www.concordyouththeatre.org.

Rattle at the Brattle, baby-friendly film series. Wednesdays 1pm, \$9, Harvard Square. For film schedule/info, visit www.brattlefilm.org/parents.html or join

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email list by sending an email to parents@brattlefilm.org.

Somerville Theater movies for caregivers with babies

Tuesdays 1:15pm, \$4, Davis Square.
Info: 617-625-4088.

Harvard Museum of Natural History
26 Oxford St, Cambridge. Sat. programs for kids age pre-school to 1st grade. Info: (617) 495-3045.

www.hmn.harvard.edu/education/kids.html

Habitat Wildlife Sanctuary

10 Juniper Rd, Belmont. Trails wind through forests, across meadows, around 2 ponds, and wetlands. Weekly programs for kids. Info: 617-489-5050.
www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/Sanctuaries/Habitat/index.php

Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary

208 South Great Rd, Lincoln. Explore the fields and forest and visit the farmyard. Weekly programs for kids. Info: 781-259-2200. www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/Sanctuaries/Drumlin_Farm/index.php

Ecotarium

222 Harrington Way, Worcester. Nurture young children's curiosity and wonder with hands-on exploration of real things. Monthly programs. Info 508-929-2700.
www.ecotarium.org

Puppet Showplace Theatre

32 Station Street, Brookline. Weekly Wed and Thurs shows at 10:30am for 3-5 year olds. Info: (617) 731-6400.
www.puppetshowplace.org

Benefits

An evening of music with singer-songwriter Dave Murphy

Sat. April 3, 8:30 pm
Arlington Senior Center, 27 Maple St. Tickets \$10 in advance (127 Lowell St.), \$12 at door. Benefit for Arlington Heights Nursery School.
Info: 781-646-8499.

Kans for Kids

Sat. April 10, 10am-1pm

Donate clean returnable bottles and cans to benefit Arlington Recreation's Youth Activities. Gibbs School on Tufts St. 781-316-3880.

KidSpace Second Annual Silent Auction

Sun. April 25, 2-5 pm

Payson Park Church, 365 Belmont St., Belmont. Info: 617-484-8697 or www.belmontkidspace.org

PTO Thrift Shop for the Arlington Public Schools

Open Tuesdays 9:30am-1:30pm;
Wednesdays 4-8pm

Located in the basement of the Fox Library at 175 Mass. Ave. Gently-used clothing for all ages, toys, books, housewares and more. Donations are accepted on the last Wed. of the month, 4-8 pm, or by appointment. **Volunteers needed** during store hours and for donation processing. Contact Toni Langerman at krausman-2@rcn.com or 781-641-9969.

Seminars and Open Houses

Understanding and Managing Sibling Relationships

Wed. April 14, 7-9 pm

Dallin Elementary School Auditorium. For parents of students in Grades K-8. This workshop will start with a short introduction on the effects of birth order and its influence on sibling relationships. What are realistic expectations of our kid's relationships with each other and how can we deal with the games and negative behaviors that arise at home? A Parent Education Forum sponsored by the Arlington Public Schools Health Education Dept. and others. Free, but donations accepted. Info: 781-316-3570.

Caregiver/Baby Groups

Baby Talk Drop-In Group

Tuesdays, 10:15-11:30am

Teen Room at the Boys & Girls Club. For parents/caregivers and their babies, birth to 18 mos. Come socialize while your infant or toddler plays with age appropriate toys. \$3/visit. Runs through May 25. Info: 781-648-1617.

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

Every-other Tues. (4/6, 4/20, 5,4) 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.

New Mothers' Group

Wednesdays, 10-11:30am

Beth Israel Deaconess & Children's Hospital Medical Care Center, 482 Bedford St., Lexington. Free, group meets for eight weeks. To register or for more info, call Kristin Hicks at 617-667-2229.

Older First-time Moms' Group

Meets every third Wed. of month

7-8:30pm. Social and support discussion group for first-time moms in their late 30's and 40's in the Boston area. Free. \$1 donation suggested. Call 781-674-2029 for location.

Grandparents' Support Group

Second Tues. of the month, 12-1:30pm

For grandparents who are primary caretakers of their grandchildren. Sponsored by the Town of Arlington.
Info: 781-316-3410.

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 info: 800-882-1250.

Parenting Group

8-week session starting Thursday, April 1. For parents with children of all ages. Topics include child development, family routines, discipline techniques, communication, community resources, self-esteem and parental stress. Meets weekly 6-7pm, \$60 for 8 week course. Sponsored by the Woburn Council of Social Concern. Info: Contact Cara Cogliano, 781-935-6495 ext. 217.

Arlington Family Connection
PO Box 150
Arlington, MA 02476



Save the Dates!



Thursday, April 1

AFC Book Club

Meets first Thurs. of every month. For more info contact Gail Zyla at gail@zyla.com. This month's book is *Running with Scissors* by Augusten Burroughs.

Saturday, April 3

Working Moms Group

Meets first Sat. of every month, 10:30am-12pm, for a casual discussion forum. Arlington Senior Center, 27 Maple St. There will be an additional social outing every month. For questions or to join the mailing list, please contact Wendy at workingmoms@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org or call 781-648-2341.

Tuesday, April 6

AFC Steering Committee

8pm. Open to all members. New members especially encouraged to attend and

meet others; get involved. For the meeting's location, contact Ruth Schmidt at 781-643-2362 or info@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org

Tuesday, April 13

AFC Mom's Movie Night at the Capitol Theater

7pm-ish, followed by dessert and discussion at Flora. An email will be sent a couple days prior announcing the movie title, time, and other details. No reservations needed. Info: Janet at 781-643-4842 or jbgascoigne@rcn.com

Saturday, June 5

AFC Night out at MOMologues

8 pm, Regent Theatre, 7 Medford St., Arlington. The original comedy about motherhood: what's intimacy like when you're nine months pregnant? How do you nurse on the sly at work? Have you ever stalked a playground for a suitable date...for your two-year old? Visit

<http://regenttheatre.com/events/momologue.htm>

Special reserved group tickets available for AFC members and their friends: \$21 each (includes \$1 restoration fee). For tickets, send a check and self-addressed, stamped envelope to: AFC, PO Box 150, Arlington, MA. (Make checks payable to "Arlington Family Connection".)

*Tickets are limited, orders must be received no later than **April 30**. Filled on a first-come first-served basis.* Questions? Contact Ruth, 781-643-2362 or outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org

Also watch for information about a dinner gathering prior to show at a local restaurant.