

Arlington Family Connection

supporting children six and under and those who care for them



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www.arlingtonfamilyconnection.org



Stay healthy this flu season

There's still time to get a flu shot for your child, if you choose to vaccinate.

The American Academy of Pediatrics, along with the federal Centers for Disease Control, recommends flu shots for children 6 to 23 months old. (The vaccine is not approved for use in children younger than months.)

The recommendation is based on two studies, published in 2000, that indicated that children under age 2, even those who had previously been healthy, were more likely to be hospitalized for complications of the flu than older, healthy children. (See www.cispimmunize.org for more information about the specific studies, and other information about influenza and children.)

In addition, it's recommended that children in the following risk groups receive a flu vaccine:

- were born prematurely and are at increased risk of developing lung problems if they get influenza
- have chronic heart or lung disorders, including asthma.

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Kids' art corner



*Artist Megan Rouls, 4 years old.
Walking her dog under a rainbow*

Kids' Corner

Wouldn't it be fun to see your child's talents printed in the AFC newsletter? Send us artwork, stories or poems from your kids and we'll do the rest. Please send your submissions to newsletter@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org or just contact us and we'll help you decide how to submit material.

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Flu *continued from page 1*

- in the past year saw a doctor regularly or were hospitalized for chronic diseases such as diabetes mellitus, kidney disease, severe anemia, or immune deficiency (including HIV/AIDS and immunosuppression caused by drugs)
- are on long-term aspirin therapy and may be at risk for Reye syndrome if they catch the flu
- live with someone in any of the high-risk groups above.

While it's considered best to get a flu vaccine in October or November, according to the CDC, it's not too late to get a vaccine in December. (Flu season lasts until March, usually peaking in February). Children under age 9 who have never received the flu vaccine will need to get two doses, about a month apart.

Of course, vaccinations are a complicated subject, and the ultimate decision rests with parents, in consultation with a physician, if necessary. Among those children for whom flu vaccine is not recommended are those allergic to eggs and those who have had a negative reaction to a previous flu vaccine.

One concern is the use of thimerosal, a preservative that contains mercury, in most flu vaccine, including pediatric doses. (Thimerosal is not used in other routine childhood vaccines distributed within the U.S.) The CDC considers flu vaccine with thimerosal safe for children. (See <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/thimerosal.htm> for more information.)

There is a limited amount of thimerosal-free vaccine produced each year; if you are concerned, ask your pediatrician if it's available. The thimerosal-free vaccine comes in single-dose vials; some suggest that parents request to see the vial being opened.

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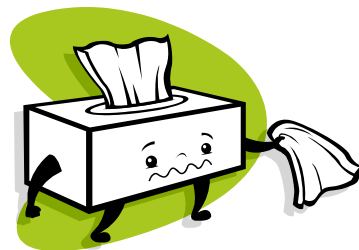
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Here are some tips for keeping healthy during flu season:

- Avoid close contact with others who are sick.
- Wash hands, often! Use soap or, for older children, alcohol-based hand-sanitizing products. (Hand-sanitizers are not recommended for infants or toddlers). Teach your kids to wash thoroughly—one suggestion is to have them sing a song, like “Happy Birthday,” while washing to ensure they spend enough time scrubbing, approximately 15 to 20 seconds. (Anti-bacterial soaps are no better at combating influenza and other viruses than regular soaps).
- Teach your children to avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth. (With toddlers, easier said than done!)
- Teach children to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when they sneeze—or cover it for them. Throw away the tissue when done; wash hands.
- Teach children not to handle used tissues; keep waste baskets out of reach of little ones.





Holiday recipes

With the holidays approaching, some AFC members have agreed to share some favorite family recipes.

CRANBERRY FRUIT BREAD

(Courtesy Maureen Igoe)

- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 1 ½ tsp. baking powder**
- ½ tsp. baking soda**
- 1 tsp. salt**
- ¼ cup shortening**
- 1 tsp grated orange rind**
- ¾ cup orange juice**
- 1 egg, beaten**
- ½ cup chopped walnuts (optional)**
- 2 cups chopped cranberries**



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix together flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Cut in shortening until mixture resembles corn meal. Combine orange rind and juice with beaten egg. Pour all at once into dry ingredients mixing just enough to dampen. Carefully fold in nuts and cranberries. Spoon into greased pan – spread corners and sides slightly higher than center. Bake for 1 hour until golden brown and toothpick comes out clean. Remove from pan. Store overnight for easy slicing.

HOLIDAY YAMS

(Courtesy Ruth Schmidt)

“This is a very unexact, family recipe; probably works just as well with sweet potatoes.”

Peel yams, cook until tender. (boil or microwave - my mom probably used a pressure cooker.) Mash with a potato masher. Add butter. Fold in some crushed pineapple. Put in a Pyrex dish and bake until warm. Top with small marshmallows - broil until brown and melty.

LITTLE CHEWY CHRISTMAS CAKES

(Courtesy Ruth Schmidt)

“I can’t remember how many this makes, but the last time I made it I noted that if I tripled the frosting recipe and doubled the cake recipe, the proportions—and number of cakes—was perfect for us. They are SO yummy you won’t stop eating them. A family I

used to babysit for as a teen made them for their holiday parties, as they are quite cute.”

Cakes:

- 1 cup brown sugar**
- 2 rounded Tbsp flour**
- 2 eggs**
- 1 cup ground & finely chopped walnuts (or pecans, which I prefer)**
- pinch of salt**

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Mix ingredients together. Fill mini-muffin cups, approximately ½ to 2/3 full. Bake 12-15 minutes, cool on rack.

Frosting:

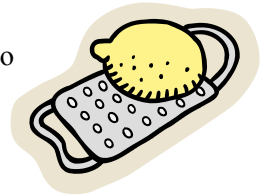
- 1 small (3 oz) pkg. cream cheese**
- ½ stick butter or margarine**
- 1 ½ cups powdered sugar**
- ½ tsp vanilla**
- "bit" of cream or milk (to make correct consistency)**

Mix together, adding more cream/milk if too thick. Frost cooled cakes. Decorate top with a ½ red or green maraschino cherry.

LEMON CRISPS

(Courtesy Ruth Schmidt)

“My favorite rolled cookie recipe to make holiday shapes and decorate. Basically just a mildly flavored butter cookie.”



- 2 cups sugar**
- 1 cup butter or margarine**
- 3 eggs**
- rind and juice of 2 lemons**
- Approximately 5 ½ cups flour (enough to roll thin)**

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Mix together ingredients. Roll out portions on a floured board and cut with cookie cutters. Decorate with colored sugars, cinnamon hearts, gold balls, sprinkles, etc. before baking. (Or, frost after baking). Bake for approximately 15 minutes.

RUGELACH

(Courtesy Helene Ragovin James)

“The big challenge in making rugelach is that the dough is very moist, and gets sticky quickly unless it’s kept well-chilled at all times. I learned about the ingenious “plastic bag” technique from my favorite Jewish cookbook, “The New Jewish Holiday

Cookbook” by Gloria Kaufer Greene, and adapted it my mother’s recipe. Rugelach are a Hanukkah tradition.

Dough

½ lb. (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened (NOT margarine)

8 ounces cream cheese, softened (Low-fat works OK; avoid non-fat)

2 cups all-purpose flour

Filling

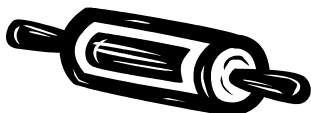
½ cup sugar

½ cup seedless raisins

1 tsp. cinnamon

1 cup finely chopped walnuts

¼ cup sugar (for topping)



With an electric mixer, cream butter and cream cheese. Gradually add flour, mixing until you have a smooth dough. Divide dough into four balls. Put each ball into a large (gallon-size) plastic bag.

On a sheet of paper, draw a 9-inch circle. Use that as a guide to roll each dough ball into a 9-inch disc, *while keeping the dough inside the plastic bag*. Refrigerate for up to an hour, or more. (They can keep overnight).

Make filling: using a food processor fitted with a chopping blade, mix ½ cup sugar, raisins, cinnamon and walnuts. Process until nuts are cut into fairly fine pieces.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Remove one dough disc from refrigerator; let soften just a bit if it’s excessively hard. Using scissors, cut edges of plastic bag, and remove top layer of plastic from dough. Place dough disc on counter or table; sprinkle with ¼ of the filling mixture. Using a small knife or pizza cutter, cut dough into 8 sections, the way you would cut a pizza. (You can cut the disc into 16 sections, but I find that too small to work with easily).

Starting at the wide end, roll each rugelach toward the tip, like a crescent roll. Place, point-side down, on baking sheet lined with parchment paper or a silicon (Silpat) baking sheet. Repeat process with the rest of the dough, keeping unused discs in refrigerator until they are needed.

Bake 18-22 minutes, until lightly browned; cool on wire racks. Makes 36 rugelach.

CAPPUCCINO CRINKLES

(Courtesy Helene Ragovin James)

“This originally comes from one of those Better Homes and Gardens’ annual cookie magazines. My son loves helping to roll the little “dough balls” in the sugar. Messy, but fun.”

1/3 cup butter (no substitutes), softened

1 cup packed brown sugar

2/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder

1 tablespoon instant coffee granules

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

2 egg whites

1/3 cup vanilla yogurt

1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour

1/4 cup granulated sugar (or colored sugars)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cream the butter with electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add the brown sugar, cocoa powder, coffee granules, baking soda, and cinnamon. Beat until combined. Beat in egg whites and yogurt until combined. Beat in as much of the flour as you can with the mixer. Stir in remaining flour with a wooden spoon.

Place granulated sugar, or colored sugars, in a small bowl. Drop dough by heaping teaspoons into sugar and roll into balls. Roll again in sugar. Place balls 2 inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes or until edges are firm. Transfer cookies to wire racks and cool. Makes about 32. Make-Ahead Tip: Place in layers separated by waxed paper in an airtight container; cover. Store at room temperature up to 1 week or freeze up to 3 months.



One kind word can warm three winter months
~ Japanese Proverb

Discounted museum passes

By Amy Speare

We are fortunate to live in an area that offers such a variety of educational and cultural opportunities for families. And with discounted and free passes, we no longer have to wait for a family member to visit as an excuse to discover something new.

Discounted museum passes are available through the Robbins Library for Arlington residents with Minuteman Library Network cards. Passes are very easy to obtain and can be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis, either in person at the circulation desk or by calling 781-316-3200.



Children's Museum—admits four, with pass museum charges \$1/person. 300 Congress St., Boston. 617-426-8855 or www.bostonkids.org

Discovery Museum—admits three, with pass museum charges \$1/person. 177 Main St., Acton. 978-264-4200 or www.discoverymuseums.org

Gardner Museum—admits four, with pass museum charges \$2/person. Children under 18 are always free. 280 The Fenway, Boston. 617-566-1401 or www.gardnermuseum.org

Museum of Fine Arts—admits two, one pass is available. Free admission with pass. 465 Huntington Ave., Boston. 617-267-9300 or www.mfa.org

Museum of Science—admits four, with pass museum charges \$4/person. Science Park, Boston. 617-723-2500 or www.mos.org

In addition, many local attractions offer monthly free or discounted admission days.



Indoor play spaces

The time of year is approaching when we'll soon be driven inside with our children, only to emerge in the spring, bleary-eyed and just the slightest bit frazzled.

While there's certainly a lot to be said for outdoor winter play—what could be more fun than Robbins Farm Park and a sled on a snowy afternoon?—the fact reminds that wintertime forces us to be more inventive about indoor activities. Following is a compilation of drop-in indoor play spaces, perfect for burning off energy and staving off cabin fever.

Continued on page 6

Children's Museum—FREE every Friday night 5–9 p.m. 300 Congress St., Boston. 617-426-8855 or www.bostonkids.org

Ecotarium—FREE the first Sunday of every month 12–5 p.m. Fees may apply to special programs. 222 Harington Way, Worcester. 508-929-2700 or www.ecotarium.org.

Franklin Park Zoo—half price admission the first Saturday of every month 10 a.m.–noon. One Franklin Park Rd., Boston. 617-541-5466 or www.zoonewengland.org

Harvard Museum of Natural History—FREE every Sunday 9 a.m.–noon. 26 Oxford St., Cambridge. 617-495-3045 or www.hmn.harvard.edu/.

Museum of Fine Arts—every Wednesday 4–9:45 p.m., general admission is "pay what you like." 465 Huntington Ave., Boston. 617-267-9300 or www.mfa.org

Museum of Science—On Tuesday and Wednesday, from 7 p.m. on, \$2.50 discount per ticket to shows at the Omni Theater. Science Park, Boston. 617-723-2500 or www.mos.org

Stone Zoo—half price admission the first Saturday of every month 10 a.m.–noon. 149 Pond St., Stoneham. 781-438-5100 or www.zoonewengland.org

MIT Museum—FREE the third Sunday of every month noon–5 p.m. 265 Mass. Ave., MIT Bldg. N52, Cambridge. 617-253-4444 or web.mit.edu/museum

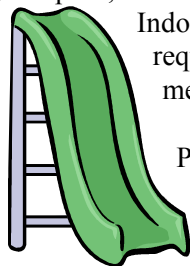
Indoor play *continued from page 5*

(For updated information, check the monthly AFC calendar; we also suggest checking out “The Compleat Day Tripper,” www.piercepress.com)

aMAZement Play Center: At Cedarland Fun Center, Boston Road, Haverhill. Open daily. Tubes and 7-level maze; separate toddler area. 978 521-7700. www.cedarland.net.

Bedford Family Connection Playroom: Mon. – Fri. 9:30-11:30am. First Parish Church, 75 The Great Rd., Bedford. Members: \$.50/child per day; non-members: \$2/child per day. Info: 781-275-5231. <http://mywebpages.comcast.net/rlcww/BFC.hm>

Belmont KidSpace: Mon. & Thu. 1-5 p.m.; Fri, 5-8 p.m.; Sat. 9 a.m. to noon; 2nd and 4th Sun. 2-5 p.m. Payson Park Church, 365 Belmont St., Belmont. KidSpace now operates as a cooperative, season (until May), or \$10 for a trial



Indoor play space available for ages 5 and under, requiring membership. Membership is \$45 for the membership. www.belmontkidspace.org.

Bonkers Funhouse Pizza: 535 Lowell St., daily. 978-535-8355.

Peabody. Rides and a maze, along with pizza. Open www.bonkersfunhouse.com.

Boston Children’s Museum: 300 Congress St., Boston. The whole museum is effectively a drop-in playspace, with hands-on activities and physical challenges such as Climbing the Walls, a rock-climbing area (with special section for kids 3-5); the New Balance Climb, a two-story maze of towers and tubes; and the Smith Family Playspace, for kids 3 and under. Open daily, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (until 9 p.m. Fridays); the Playspace closes a half-hour earlier than other exhibits. 617-426-8855. www.bostonkids.org.

Discovery Center at the Museum of Science: Science Park, Boston. Specifically designed for children 5 and under (with a special area for babies/toddlers), the Discovery Center offers plenty of space to move around and explore science in a fun, hands-on manner. Open daily 10 a.m. - 4:45 p.m., and until 7:30 p.m. every Friday. During school vacation weeks, 10 a.m. - 6:45 p.m. and until 7:30 p.m. on Fridays. Admission is included with Exhibit Hall tickets. 617-723-2500. www.mos.org.

Kids Playground: 15 Normac Rd, Woburn. (Exit 36 off Rt. 128). Open daily; call for hours. Huge indoor playground with play space, tubes & tunnels, climbing, mini golf, interactive village. Separate area for toddlers. 781-935-2300. www.kidsplayground.com

One-Stop Fun: 49 Power Road, Westford. Open daily. Gym Mania indoor playground, 3 stories of tubes and tunnels for climbing; separate area for toddlers. 978-692-9907. www.onestopfun.com.

Puddlestompers Playgroup: Mon., 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Fox library community room, Arlington. During the good weather, Puddlestompers meet outside for playground fun and field trips; during inclement weather, there’s toys and space to play downstairs at the Fox. \$1/family. For toddlers and preschoolers. To join the e-mail list, contact Susan, 781-641-3792 or sedorson@yahoo.com.

Winchester Drop-In Playtime: Thurs, 9:30 to 11 a.m.; Mystic School, 263 Main St., Winchester. Games, toys and more at this drop-in play space for ages 9 months to 4 years. \$5/family. 781-721-7125.

Winterpark at the Waldorf School: Fri., 9:30-11 a.m., Waldorf School, 739 Mass. Ave., Lexington. Drop-in program for parents and children under age 3. Meet other families; prepare a snack; end the morning with circle time. Led by a Waldorf-trained early childhood teacher. Suggested donation \$5-10. 781-863-1062. www.thewaldorfschool.org



AFC Membership/Renewal Form



New Member Renewal

Date:

School District (circle for geographic location):

Bishop Brackett Dallin Hardy
Peirce Stratton Thompson Out of town

Name(s):

Address, Zip:

E-mails:

Phone:

Areas of Interest:

Events/Parties New Parent Outreach Seminars
Newsletter Outings with kids Web site
Playgroups Outings without kids Other

Please list your children:

Name Gender Date of Birth

Membership Dues *All memberships renew in September*

One-year membership \$20 (joining July-January)
 Mid-year discounted membership \$10 (joining Feb-June)
 Send a gift membership (\$10 or \$20) to the following:

Please circle all that apply:

I am a: Parent Child Care Provider Educator
Grandparent Health Care Provider Other

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

I am: Employed full-time Stay at home parent
Employed part-time Other

Arlington Family Connection
PO Box 150
Arlington, MA 02476

Newsletter delivery preferences:

US Mail Email Both

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

Submit articles, recipes, tips, reviews, etc to the AFC newsletter team!

We rely on our members to submit material for publication in the newsletter. A steady stream of articles helps the newsletter team create upcoming issues. So, if you've been thinking about writing, or want to share a great kid-friendly restaurant, please submit material by email to

newsletter@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org

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, 2005. 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 reserves the right to refuse submissions for any reason and reserves the right to edit material as deemed necessary. Send editorial submissions to:

newsletter@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org; calendar listings to calendar@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org



Calendar

Special Events for Families

Zoolights

Thru Dec. 30 (closed Dec. 25). 5-9pm. Stone Zoo, 149 Pond St., Stoneham. See the arctic fox, bald eagles, and reindeer that live in Yukon Creek. Get your picture taken with Santa (thru Dec. 23). Explore Santa's Castle, with dancing fairy tale characters and thousands of lights. \$4/Adults; \$3/Ages 2-12. Info: 781-438-5100, <http://www.zoonewengland.com>

Holiday Train Display

Dec. 2–Jan. 1, 7am-10pm. South Station, Boston. Large model trains wind over 400 sq. feet of a winter wonderland display. Ages 2 & up. Free.

Holiday Festival of Lights

Thru Jan. 1. Mon. - Thurs. 4-9pm, Fri. 4-10pm, Sat. 2-10pm, Sun. 2-9pm. Edaville Railroad, 7 Eda Ave., Carver. Walk down the main concourse, decorated with millions of holiday lights, and take a 35-minute train ride that winds its way through forests, past lakes and over cranberry bogs, where animated displays capture the imagination of young and old alike. \$16/Adult; \$14/Ages 2-12. Info: 877-EDAVILLE, <http://www.edaville.com>

Petting Zoo & Family Fun

Sat. & Sun. thru Dec. 18. 11am-4pm. Seasons Four, 1265 Mass. Ave., Lexington. Family activities include face painting, balloon expressionist, silhouettes, live music, and Santa and Elmo visits (bring your camera!). Info and schedule of events: 781-861-1200, <http://www.seasons-four.com>

Holiday Lighting Ceremony

Dec. 2, 4-9pm. Lexington's downtown comes alive. Santa will arrive in Depot Sq. (Mass. Ave.) at 6:30pm to conduct the official illumination of holiday lights. He then strolls through the downtown streets, visiting stores and greeting children with candy canes. Carolers and musical groups will entertain in- and outdoors. Info: <http://lexingtonchamber.org/events.html>

Beauty & the Beast

Dec. 2 & 9, 7:30pm, Dec. 3, 4, 10, 11, 2:30pm. Performed by the Concord Youth Theater. Sanborn School, 835 Old Marlborough Rd., Concord. \$9-\$12. Info: 978-371-1482, <http://www.concordyouththeatre.org>

Snowflake Fairy Winter Celebration

Sat. Dec. 3, 10:30am. Robbins Library. Songs, stories, games and music. Ages 2-8. Tickets available Dec. 1. Free. A Russell Fund Program. Info: 781-316-3234.

Visit with Santa at Verrill Farm

Sat. Dec. 3, 3-5pm. 11 Wheeler Rd. & Rte. 117, Concord. Take your own pictures with Santa, share holiday treats and hear live music with the family. Info: 978-369-4494, <http://www.verrillfam.com>

Waldorf School Holiday Fair

Sat. Dec. 3, 10am-4pm. Waldorf, 739 Mass. Ave., Lexington. Don't miss this festive family event. Live music, children's crafts, a Marionette Show at 12pm and 1:30pm, a Mummers Play at 1pm and 2:30pm, as well as face painting and Fight the Knight events all day. \$5/adult, \$3/child, \$13/family. Info: 781-863-1062, <http://www.thewaldorfschool.org>

Mo-Co Arts Youth Arts & Entertainment Concert

Sun. Dec. 4, 3pm. Regent Theater, 7 Medford St., Arl. Singing, drumming & dance performed by children in grades K-8. \$8. Info: 781-646-4849, <http://www.regenttheatre.com>

Model Railroad Trains Exhibit

Sat. Dec. 10, 10am-5pm, Sun. Dec. 11, 12-5pm. National Heritage Museum, 33 Marrett Rd., Rt. 2A, Lexington. The HUB Division of Model Railroad Trains returns for its annual display. \$5/family. Info: 781-861-6559, <http://www.monh.org>

Holiday Pops Kids Matinee

Sat. Dec. 10, 11am. Symphony Hall, Boston. New this season, treat your family to a Holiday Pops concert specially designed for kids, including sing-a-long, more time with Santa and a post-concert photo opportunity with Santa (bring your camera!). \$31-\$109. Info: 888-266-1200, <http://www.bso.org>

Boston First Night Celebration

Sun. Dec. 31 – Tues. Jan. 2. Highlights include over 250 performances at 40 venues around downtown. Notable events include ice sculptures, Mardi-Gras style Grand Procession, and Family Fireworks Celebration on the Common. \$15/Button; Free/Under 4. Info: 617-542-1399, <http://www.firstnight.org>

Sing-alongs & Music

Mondays

5pm. Finagle a Bagel, 91 Middlesex Tpke., Burlington. Ed Morgan performs a selection of fun original and classic children's songs. Free. Info: 781-273-6500, <http://www.finagleabagel.com>

Tuesdays, Dec. 6, 13

10am. Robbins Library. For infants and toddlers. Space is limited, tickets available at 9am. Info: 781-316-3234.

NEW! Thursdays

French Story & Song Hour, 11am. Wild Child, 397 Mass. Ave., Arl. Under 3 years. Free. Info: 781-483-3566, <http://www.wildmamasconnection.com>

Thursday, Dec. 1

10am. Fox Library. Join Sulinha for singing, dancing and fun. Info: 781-316-3198.

Second & fourth Friday of the month

10am. Calvary United Methodist Church, 300 Mass Ave, Arl. Sing-along with Diane Taraz. \$1. Info: 781-648-3719, <http://www.dianetaraz.com>

Saturdays and Sundays

5-8pm on WERS 88.9FM radio. Every weekend The Playground program from the Emerson College radio station plays the best local, national and international kids artists as well as classic hits, Broadway show tunes and more. Info: 617-824-8891, <http://www.wers.org>

Saturdays

11am. Stellabella Toys, 1360 Cambridge St., Inman Sq., Cambridge. Join local musicians to sing songs and play games. All ages. Free. Info: 617-491-6290.

Library Storytimes

Tuesdays, Dec. 6, 13

10am ages 2 ½ to 3; 10:30am, ages 4-5. Fox Library. Info: 781-316-3198.

Wednesday, Dec. 14

4pm, Fox Library. Winter stories read by Bill Hayner and a craft. Ages 3 & up. Info: 781-316-3198.

Thursday, Dec. 15

10am., Fox Library. Big Ryan's Tall Tales. Storytelling, music, puppets, interactive play. Ages 3-5. Drop-in. A Russell Fund Program. Info: 781-316-3198.

Other Storytimes

UPDATE! National Heritage Museum

Thurs. Dec. 15, 10:30am. 33 Marrett Road, Rt. 2A, Lexington. Tea Time! Come and listen to the classic *Miss Spider's Tea Party*. We'll decorate paper teacups for our own tea parties. Ages 4 and under. \$3 child. 781-861-6559, <http://www.monh.org/>

Barefoot Books

Fri. & Sat. 10:30am, ages 2 & up. Sun. 2pm, ages 5 & up (not every week – call for dates). 1771 Mass. Ave., Camb. A fun hour of age-appropriate stories. Coloring and refreshments too! Free. 617-349-1610, http://www.barefoot-books.com/us/site/pages/306_generic_php

Barnes & Noble

98 Middlesex Tpke., Burlington. Pre-schoolers – Tues. at 10:30am Pajamarama – Fri. at 7pm. Free. Info: 781-273-3871.

Harvard Coop

11am every Tues. & Sat. 1400 Mass. Ave., Camb. Join us for our preschool story hour with snack and craft on the Lower Level. Free. Info: 617-499-2000.

Henry Bear's Park

Thurs. 11am at Arl. & Camb. locations. Ages 3-6. Free. 685 Mass. Ave., Arl. 781-646-9400. 361 Huron Ave., Camb. 617-547-8424.

Porter Square Books

11am, 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, Porter Sq. Shopping Ctr., Camb. For toddlers/preschoolers. Free. Info: 617-491-2220, <http://www.portersquarebooks.com>

Pottery Barn Kids

11:30am Mon.-Fri.. Check store for details. Free. Pottery Barn Kids, Burlington Mall. Info: 781-221-5833.

Other Arlington Fun Stuff

UPDATE! Regent Theatre Family Fun Shows

The Regent Theater (7 Medford St., Arl.) offers great family programs.
Dec. 3 – Holiday Dance Spectacular
Dec. 10 – Ben Rudnick 4th Annual Holiday Show
Dec. 17 – Happy Holidays Around the World \$7/adult, \$5/child. Info: 781-646-4849, <http://www.regenttheatre.com>

Arlington Boys & Girls Club

60 Pond Ln., Offers a variety of programs for children ages 6 mo. & up from swimming to tumbling and more. \$20/annual child membership, plus fee for ea. program. 781-648-1617, <http://www.abgclub.org>

Arlington Center for the Arts

41 Foster St., ACA offers creative programs for kids, including vacation arts programs. Info: 781-648-6220, <http://www.acarts.org>

Arlington Rec. Dept.

Each season, the Arl. Rec. Dept. offers a number of programs for small children,

including skating, indoor gym playtime, arts & crafts, gymnastics, sports, and yoga. 422 Summer St. Info: 781-316-3880, http://www.town.Arlington.ma.us/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_Recreation/index

Art Beat Weekend Workshops

Weekday 1 hr. drop-in program, anytime from 10am-5pm. Choose from a variety of projects. \$10-20/project.
Saturday drop-in program from 3-6pm. Different themed craft each week, focusing on world cultures. \$10-20/ project. Ages 4 & up. 212-A Mass Ave., Arl. Info: 781-646-2200, <http://www.artbeatonline.com>

Capitol Theater Movies for caregivers with babies

Mon., 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., Arl. Info: 781-648-6022. To join the email list send an email to BabyFriendlyMovies-subscribe@yahoogroups.com; or <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BabyFriendlyMovies>; for this week's movie visit <http://www.somervilletheatreonline.com>

CORE Stage Company Classes

Regent Theater, 7 Medford St., Arl. This brand new theater education conservatory program offers theater, movement and dance classes for ages 3 & up. Classes meet Wed. & Fri. \$150/month. Info: 917-597-8320, <http://www.corestagecompany.com>

Family Drop-in Swim

Fri. 5:30-6:15pm OR 6:15-7pm thru May. Arl. Boys & Girls Club, 60 Pond Ln. Open to all members and immediate family. Suggested admission: donation to the Food Pantry: Info: 781-648-1617, <http://www.abgclub.org>

Fidelity House

25 Medford St., Arl. Fidelity House offers many programs for young children, including a tot playgroup (drop-in or class), pre-school sports, and gymnastics. No membership required for children up through Kindergarten. Fees may apply for each class. Info: 781-648-2005, <http://www.fidelityhouse.org>

Parent & Tot Connection

Fridays, 9:30-11am. Arl. Boys & Girls Club, 60 Pond Ln. Drop-in playgroup for toddlers and preschoolers with parent/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.

UPDATE! Public Skating

Dec. 4 *Mother & Son Skate, 2-4pm*,
Dec. 31 *Arlington Celebrates 9:30-11:30am*.
Thru March 31. 422 Summer St., Arl. Fri.

11am-1pm; 2:45-4:45 pm; 7-9pm; Sat. 4-6pm; Sun. 9:30-11:30am.; 2-4pm. \$3/child; \$6/adult. Sheets of 10 passes/\$27 child; \$54/adult. Skate rentals & sharpening, \$4/pair.

Puddlestompers Playgroup

Mondays, 10:30am-12:30pm. Drop-in pre-school playgroup has moved inside for the winter. Meets in the Fox Library Community Rm. (\$1/family donation requested). Occasional field trips, meets outside at local playgrounds in warm weather. To join the group's email list, contact Susan at 781-641-3792 or sedorson@yahoo.com.

Toddlers & Two

Wed. & Fri. 9:30-11am, thru Dec. 16. Resumes Jan. 4. Gibbs Gym, Tufts St., Arl. Indoor gym time for ages 15-36 mos with parent/caregiver, sponsored by the Arl. Rec. Dept. Drop-in for \$5/visit or purchase a punch ticket at Arl. Rec Office (422 Summer St.) for \$45/10 visits. (Please do not bring foods containing nuts.) Info: 781-316-3880.

Wild Mamas Connection

A supportive community for mamas & mamas-to-be that offers unique fitness, yoga, CPR, and nutrition classes, workshops and groups that promote fun, fitness and healthful living. \$30/year membership. Additional fees for classes and workshops. Info: 781-483-3565, <http://www.wildmamasconnection.com>

Beyond Arlington

NEW! Home Depot Kid's Workshop

First Sat. of the month. 9am-1pm. Home Depot, 10 First Ave., Waltham. Drop-in build-it-yourself project. Kids get Home Depot aprons and small kits that (with an adult assisting) they can hammer and glue together right there with Home Depot tools. Ages 2 & up. Info: 781-672-0900.

NEW! Perpetual Motion

345 Chelmsford St., Lowell. An indoor playground for kids 6 & under with a huge train playstructure, slides, ball pit, swings, sandbox, tunnels and more. Info: 978-452-0777, <http://www.perpetualmotioninc.com>

NEW! TumbleKids Open Gym

Fridays 12:30-2pm, Winchester and Waltham locations. Kids can swing, roll, run, plan and practice their gymnastic skills. \$10/child. Regular classes also offered for additional fee. 201 Arlington St., Watertown, 617-926-2640 and 38 River St., Winchester, 781-721-1144. Info: <http://www.tumblekidsusa.com>

Babes in the Woods

Tues. 10am. Middlesex Fells. Strolls & hikes through the park. Free. Info: 781-396-8994, <http://www.fells.org/babes.html>

Bedford Family Connection Playroom

Mon. – Fri. 9:30-11:30am. First Parish Church, 75 The Great Rd., Bedford. The playroom offers a warm, informal atmosphere where children can play together while parents and caregivers supervise and chat. Members: \$.50/child per day; non-members: \$2/child per day. Info: 781-275-5231, <http://mywebpages.comcast.net/rlcww/BFC.htm>

Belmont KidSpace

Note: KidSpace is now a cooperative, requiring membership. Mon. & Thurs. 1-5:30pm, Fri. 5-8pm, Sat 9am-12pm, 2nd & 4th Sun. 2-5pm. Payson Park Church, 365 Belmont St., Belmont. This indoor playspace is available for ages 5 & under. \$45 membership (Nov. - May) or \$10/trial membership. Info: 617-484-7703, <http://www.belmontkidspace.org>

Drop-in Playtime

Thursdays, 9:30-11am. Mystic School, 263 Main St., Winchester. Find fun, games, toys and more at this drop-in playspace for ages 9mo. to 4 yrs. \$5/family. Info: 781-721-7125.

Kids Playground

15 Normac Rd, Woburn. Indoor playground with play space, tubes & tunnels, mini golf, interactive village and more. Info: 781-935-2300, <http://www.kidsplayground.com>

Michaels Kids Club

Sat. 10am-12pm. Michaels Arts & Crafts, 34 Cambridge St., Burlington. Different craft each week. Ages 5-10. \$2/child. Info: 781-229-7592, <http://www.michaels.com>

Pre-school movies

Tuesdays. 10:30am. Cary Mem. Library, 1874 Mass. Ave., Lexington. Movies for pre-schoolers, ages 2-6 in the Cary Library Mtg. Rm. Info: 781-862-6288, <http://www.carylibrary.org>

UPDATE! Puppet Showplace Theatre

Note: Special vacation week shows will run Dec. 24-30. Sat. & Sun., 1pm & 3pm. Wed. & Thurs., 10:30am. 32 Station St., Brookline. Recommended for age 3 & up. Age appropriateness varies per show. Call for performance schedule. \$7/members, \$8.50/non-members. Info: 617-731-6400, <http://www.puppetshowplace.org>

Stroller Strides

A total fitness program for caregivers with children ages 6 weeks & up. Each 60 minute class consists of outdoor power walking with intervals of body toning and is taught by a certified instructor. Classes are

available in Lexington, Burlington and Winchester. Check the Web site for dates and locations. First class is free. \$15/class, with discounts for monthly membership. Info: 781-799-2925, <http://www.strollerstrides.net/winchester>

Winterpark at the Waldorf School

Fridays, 9:30-11am. Waldorf School, 739 Mass. Ave., Lexington. Drop-in program for parents and children under 3. Come and meet other families in a beautiful play space, prepare a healthy snack together, and enjoy a weekly closing circle that will send you off humming. A Waldorf-trained early childhood teacher, leads the morning. Suggested donation of \$5-10. Info: 781-863-1062, <http://www.thewaldorfschool.org>

Local Attractions

Children's Discovery Museum

177 Main St., Acton. A Victorian house with rooms, corridors, and closets creatively transformed into ten hands-on exhibit areas. Ages 6 & under. Check their calendar for special programs. \$8/person; Free/under 1. Info: 978-264-4200, <http://www.discoverymuseums.org>

Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary

208 S. Great Rd, Lincoln. Explore the fields and forest and visit the farmyard. Weekly programs for kids. Closed non-holiday Mondays. Members free, \$6/Non-member adult, \$4/Non-member ages 3-12. Info: 781-259-2200, http://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connecton/Sanctuaries/Drumlin_Farm

Ecotarium

222 Harrington Way, Worcester. Nurture young children's curiosity and wonder with hands-on exploration of real things. Monthly family preschool programs. Members free, \$8/Non-member adult, \$6/Non-member ages 3-18. Explorer Express Train ride, \$2.50/person. Info: 508-929-2700, <http://www.ecotarium.org>

Habitat Wildlife Sanctuary

10 Juniper Rd, Belmont. Trails wind through forests, across meadows, around 2 ponds, and wetlands. Also fun programs for kids. Gen. Admission: members free, \$4/non-member adult, \$3/non-member child. Info: 617-489-5050, http://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connecton/Sanctuaries/Habitat

Harvard Museum of Natural History

26 Oxford St, Cambridge. Sat. programs for kids age preschool to 3rd grade. \$7.50/Adult, \$5/Ages 3-18. *Note: Free to the public 3-5pm Weds. from Sept. –May and every Sun. 9am-12pm year round.* Info: 617-495-3045, <http://www.hmnh.harvard.edu>

National Heritage Museum

33 Marrett Rd., Rt. 2A, Lexington. Great monthly programs for kids and families including storytimes with crafts and family programs. Info: 781-861-6559, <http://www.monh.org>

Take a Walk at Gore Place

52 Gore St., Waltham. This program provides young visitors and accompanying adults with an activities backpack designed to help them explore the open spaces and hidden places on the 45-acre estate. Visitors will explore the brook, visit farm animals, and discover the gardens while drawing from the materials (magnifying glass, binoculars and activities booklet) provided in a backpack. Materials are designed for children 3-9 years old; just ring the bell at the Mansion to rent your backpack for \$5 and begin your exploration. Free parking. Info: 781-894-2798, <http://www.goreplace.org>

The Stone Zoo

149 Pond St., Stoneham. Small local zoo, with a petting barnyard, playground, and lots of animal exhibits. Great for young children! \$7/Adult, \$4.50/Ages 2-12. **Info: 781-438-5100,** <http://www.zoonewengland.com>

Seminars & Open Houses

Raising Children in a Scary World

Thurs. Dec. 8, 7pm. The Jewish Preschool of Lexington, 9 Burlington St., Lexington. Barbara Meltz, an award-winning Boston Globe Child Care Columnist, author and mother, will explore the issues of violent toys and violence on the screens. Meltz will guide parents how to talk to children about real-life scary issues in the news, from child abductions to the war on terror. \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door. Info and Tickets: Vicky Benedek (781-863-8656) or Amy Garbis (781-674-2493).

Fed Up: Winning the War Against Childhood Obesity

Thurs. Dec. 8, 7-8:30pm. Bishop School Cafeteria, 25 Columbia Rd., Arl. For parents of students, grades K-12. Susan Oakie, a family physician and an award-winning medical journalist, will strategize with parents on how we as a society must work to overcome the increasing rates of childhood obesity. Susan will tell parents what they need to know in order to live healthier and more active lives in these fast-paced and demanding times. Free. Donations accepted. Info: 781-316-3570.

Covenant School Open House

Fri. Dec. 9, 8-10am. Covenant School, 9 Westminster Ave, Arl. Come tour the school and speak to parents and staff. Covenant is a 4-year-old kindergarten through 8th grade

Christian school and a homeschooling together learning community where parents play an active role in the education of their children. Info: 781-643-5511, <http://www.covmin.org>

Effective Parenting

Groups forming now. A parenting workshop designed for parents of children birth to 3 yrs. In this workshop, you will learn practical parenting skills as well as effective ways to communicate with your child. Led by a seasoned mom and skilled facilitator, this small and highly interactive group will explore different parenting topics each week through lively discussion. \$120/person, \$160/couple. Registration & info: Melissa Lucius, 781-641-4284, parenting@rcn.com or <http://www.effective-parenting.org>

Benefits

Kans for Kids

Sat. Dec. 3 10am–1pm. Recreation Office, 422 Summer St. Donate clean returnable bottles and cans to benefit Arl. Rec. Youth Activities. Info: 781-316-3880.

PTO Thrift Shop for the Arl. Public Schools

Wed. 4-8pm, Thurs. 9:30am-1pm, 2nd Sat. of the month 12:30-5pm. Basement of the Fox Library at 175 Mass. Ave., E. Arl. Gently-used clothing for all ages, toys, books, housewares and more. Info: 781-483-3433, <http://www.ptothriftshop.com>

Groups

NEW! Wild Mamas

Fridays, 12pm. Drop-in Mom's group for ages 6 months & up. Free. Info: 781-483-3566, <http://www.wildmamasconnection.com>

Adoption Support Services

ODS/Adoption Comm. of NE, 1750 Washington St., Holliston. Non-profit membership organization for those touched by adoption. Provides education, outreach, support groups, seminars/ workshops. Local chapters sponsor activities throughout the Boston area. (Note: ODS/ACONE is not an adoption agency.) Info: 508-429-4260, <http://www.odsacone.org>

Arlington Fathers' Group

Tues. 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 & information, call 800-882-1250.

Belmont Food Allergy & Asthma Support Group

A group of parents who meet monthly to discuss and advocate for the issues that arise when you have children living with food allergies and asthma. Info: Theresa Normile, Tnormile@foodallergyfacts.com or 617-489-6668.

Grandparents' Support Group

Second Tues. of the month, 12-1:30pm. For grandparents who are primary caretakers of their grandchildren. Free, sponsored by the Town of Arl. Info: 781-316-3410.

Infancy to Independence (I to I)

16 week program for families with children ages 1-4 in Waltham and surrounding towns. Children learn and grow through free play, and creative projects while parents share advice and discuss a wide range of topics. Parents cooperatively run the program. Meets once a week (T, W, Th or F), 9-11:30am, Sept.-Jan (also Feb.-June). Limited to 12 families per day. \$50/semester plus \$10 for each add'l sibling; siblings under 1 free. To register, 781-207-0371, <http://www.ItoI-MA.org>

Learn & Play Adoption Group

1st Wed. of ea. month, 10-11:30am. Community Agencies Bldg., Emerson Hospital, 111 Old Rd. to 9 Acre Corner, Concord. Runs Sept. – June. A learn (for parents) and play (for kids) group for parents and adopted children birth to 5 yrs. Facilitated by First Connections with occasional guest speakers. Registration requested. \$30/Sept – Dec. Info: 978-287-0221, http://www.cfys.org/first_connections.htm

La Leche League

An int'l, nonprofit, organization dedicated to providing education, information, support, and encouragement to breastfeeding women. Arl. meetings at Fox Library, 175 Mass. Ave. at 7:30pm on the 3rd Tues. of ea. month. One morning meeting is held in Camb. on 2nd Thurs. of the month at 10am, 175 Harvey St., Cambridge. Free. Info: Heather 781-648-2988, <http://home.comcast.net/~jrsladkey/lll/index.html> Neighboring towns also have leagues with monthly meetings. Refer to <http://www.lllusa.org/MARIVT/Massachusetts.html> for a listing of Mass. Leagues.

UPDATE! New Mothers' Drop-in Group

Every other Tues. *Note: resumes in January.* 11:00am-12:30pm, Henry Bear's Park, 685 Mass Ave., Arl. Free, informal drop-in group for new moms with infants. Info: 617-547-8424.

NEW TIME! New Mothers' Drop-in Group

Fri. 9:30-11am, Calvary United Methodist Church, 300 Mass Ave., Arl. Free, nonsectarian, facilitated group. All new parents are welcome with their babies. Sponsored by Jewish Family & Children's Svcs. Info: 617-558-1278.

New Mothers' Group

Tues. 10-11:30am, Beth Israel Deaconess & Children's Hospital Medical Care Ctr., 482 Bedford St., Lexington. Free, group meets for 8 weeks. To register call Kristin Hicks at 617-667-2229.

Nursing Mothers' Group

Wed. at 1:30pm. Baldwin Park I, 12 Alfred St., Woburn. Drop-in. All breastfeeding mothers & babies welcome. Meet other moms and have your breastfeeding questions answered by a certified lactation consultant. \$2 donation suggested. Info: 781-756-4788, <http://www.winchesterhospital.org/>

Older First-Time Moms

Third Wed. of ea. month, 7-8:30 p.m. Fox Library. 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. Info: 781-674-2029.

Postpartum Support Group

Mondays. 10-11:30am. Vineyard Church, 15 Notre Dame Ave., 2nd fl., Camb. A lactation consultant, massage therapist, and baby scale will be available at most sessions during this drop-in group. This group is non-sectarian and is sponsored by the Midwives at Mt. Auburn. Free. Info: arlmidwife@yahoo.com, <http://www.mamah.org>



Arlington Family Connection
P.O. Box 150
Arlington, MA 02476

December 2005

Save the Dates!

Thursday, Dec. 1

AFC Outing: Drop-in Playtime

9:30-11am. Winchester Drop-in Playtime, Mystic School, 263 Main St. (corner of Madison Ave. and Main St.), Winchester. Join other AFC members for fun, games, toys and more at this drop-in playspace for ages 9mo. to 4 yrs. \$5/family. Info: Jeanne 781-643-6212 (call between 8am and 8pm) or

outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org

Thursday, Dec. 1

AFC Book Club

Meets first Thurs. of every month. This month's book is *Under the Banner of*

Heaven by Jon Krakauer. Info: Trish Richardson at richardson_728@hotmail.com

Saturday, Dec. 3

Working Moms Group

Usually meets the first Sat. of the month 10:30am-12pm, for a casual discussion. Arl. Senior Ctr., 27 Maple St. Occasionally there will be social outings.

For questions or to join the mailing list, please contact Wendy at workingmoms@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org

or call 781-648-2341.

Wednesday, Dec. 7

Transitioning from Preschool to Kindergarten

7-9pm. Brackett Gym, 66 Eastern Ave., Arl. An informative discussion regarding the issues families face as

their children enter kindergarten. Reps from the Arl. Public Schools and the Early Childhood Comm. will present information and strategies to assist parents in supporting their child's transition. Information about the kindergarten programs in the Arl. Public Schools will also be presented. Free. Donations accepted. Info: 781-316-3570.

Tuesday, Jan. 3

AFC Steering Committee Meeting

(Note: There will not be a meeting in December) 7:30pm. Open to all members. Wild Child, 397 Mass. Ave., Arl. Info: contact Ruth Schmidt at 781-643-2362 or info@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org