



Arlington Family Connection

supporting children six and under and those who care for them

Volume V, Issue 11 • January 2007

www.arlingtonfamilyconnection.org

January 8, 10:00-11:30 am Arlington Enrichment Collaborative AFC Playtime

Weekly Playtime Begins

Starting Monday, January 8, AFC will offer an all-new, weekly Playtime for children ages 0-4 that will meet every Monday (including holidays) from 10-11:30 am at Arlington Enrichment Collaborative on the second floor of 1100 Mass. Ave. (across from Jimmy's). People can drop-in anytime and it will be open to the public. The goal of the program is to provide a safe, clean, and relaxed environment where caregivers can sit, have a cup of coffee, talk together, and play with their children. Each session will end with a circle time story and songs. AFC Playtime is open to 0-4 year-olds at \$3 per family.

AFC Playtime will also host a monthly guest speaker. On January 22, a representative from Isis Maternity will give us a 30-minute sample of a developmental class. Future guest speaker topics include sleep issues, weaning, language development, nursing, and discipline. Suggestions for additional topics are welcome.

Seeking Volunteers and Toy Donations

Sarah Albers, who is heading up the weekly Playtime program, is looking for volunteers to help. Responsibilities include arriving early to set up (get out toys, make coffee), greeting attendees, gathering the group together for a story and song at the end of each session, putting toys away, and answering questions about AFC for non-members. Contact: Sarah Albers, 781-316-8181 or playgroup@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org.

Sarah is collecting additional toy donations for 3-4 year-olds. No ride-ons or toys with small pieces please. Thank you to everyone who already donated toys! (Please see page 2 for detailed wish lists.)

At each Playtime, AFC will sell Childcare & Preschool Options in Arlington books (\$8) as well as the Compleat Day Tripper (\$10), and non-members will be able to join AFC on the spot—so bring your non-AFC friends!

Organize Toys in a Snap

By Elizabeth Goodsell

In the classic movie *Mary Poppins*, Mary snaps her fingers and all the toys find their place in the nursery. While we can't call in Mary for help, there are some basic strategies for organizing children's toys—in a snap. Here's how to start.

Tackle trouble spots

Organizing toys may seem daunting, but you don't have to do it all at once. Start with the area that bothers you the most.

1. Set aside a time and place to organize. If you have toys throughout the house, gather them up. Then, group like items, for example, making one pile for art supplies, another for games. You may find that you have five cans of yellow Playdough.
2. Get three boxes or paper bags and label them Save, Donate and Fix. Put toys your child has outgrown into the Save box if they'll be passed on to a sibling or if they have sentimental value. Place duplicates or toys you don't need anymore in the Donate box (if they are still in good condition). If you find books and toys that need some TLC, place them in the Fix box.
3. Take a moment to congratulate yourself – you've already accomplished a lot!
4. Put toys from the Save box into your attic, garage, or other storage area. Put the Donate box in your car or by the door, to ensure that you'll drop it off to the charity of your choice. Some charities also pick up donations from your home. Toys in the Fix box can be dealt with later.

Keep the peace

Once you've purged, you should be left with a more manageable number of toys. Here are strategies to help you stay organized and make cleanup a snap:

Continued on page 7

Toy & Equipment Donations Needed for AFC Playtime

AFC is seeking additional toy donations for 3-4 year-olds. No ride-ons or toys with small pieces please.

Toy wish list:

- Books
- Small trains and/or trucks
- Set of small blocks
- Playdoh tools
- Large bubble blower

Equipment wish list:

- Large storage unit, preferably metal with doors, and approx. 30" deep
- 2' x 3' wall bulletin board
- Neat sheets
- Set of small hollow plastic balls for use with parachute
- Money box with key

If you have these or other toys to donate, please contact Sarah, 781-316-8181 or playgroup@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org.

Arlington Family Connection Directory

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info@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org
781-646-5417

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workingmoms@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org

Parents Afternoon Out Planned for Feb. 3

Arlington Family Connection and Arlington Enrichment Collaborative's first Parents Afternoon Out, held on December 9, was a great success. Along with AEC staff and a group of certified teenage babysitters, the kids enjoyed a host of activities to keep them busy, including Playdoh, Duplos, finger painting, circle games, stories, and lots of toys to play with.

If you missed out on the December event, AFC and AEC are planning a second event on Saturday, February 3, from 2:30-5:30 pm. Cost will be \$19 for 1 child, or \$30 for 2. If you bring a friend who has not attended before, AEC will give each family a few dollars off of the price.

For information, contact: Amy 781-646-5417, outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org.

Save the Date! Winter Beach Party March 3, 2007

Mark your calendars for AFC's sizzling winter Beach Party—Saturday, March 3, at the Gibbs Gym in East Arlington. Join us for sand, sun, and fun, and benefit local charities! More party details will follow in next month's newsletter, so be on the lookout!

Seeking Party Volunteers

We're currently seeking volunteers to:

- Plan and run a raffle to benefit two local charities. (2 volunteers needed; contact Jessie Keating at design@j2solutions.net.)
- Run an Arlington Family Connection membership table to help spread the word about AFC to party-goers. (3 volunteers needed; contact Jessie Keating at design@j2solutions.net.)
- Bake and/or sell yummy treats to help benefit our charities. (Contact Debra Reardon at dreardon@rcn.com.)
- Help set up, clean up, and run activity stations during the party. (Contact Lauren Boyle at Ivarian@aim.com.)

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, 2007. 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. Send editorial submissions to: newsletter@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org; calendar listings to calendar@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org

Small Steps, Big Fun: A Parents-With-Kids Guide to Arlington Center

By Carrie Finison

In my not-so-long-ago office-working days, I rarely made it to Arlington Center during daylight hours. Even my nighttime visits to the center of town were infrequent and primarily food-oriented — dinner at Punjab, ice cream at J.P. Licks (now the Chilly Cow).



Fast forward 18 months, and Arlington Center has become a destination for me and my son. For us, the biggest draw is the children’s room at **Robbins Library**. We’re regulars at the library’s Tuesday morning sing-alongs. The library also hosts weekly storytimes and other children’s events. And when there’s no organized activity, there’s still a nice play area with puppets and puzzles and (of course) books.

In warm weather, one of our favorite places is the “secret garden” between the library and the town hall. It’s officially called the **Whittemore-Robbins Park**, but I call it secret because it’s hidden from the street by a high stone wall and row of shrubs. (This also makes it easy to keep an eye on roving children when you’re inside the park.) Benches line the brick pathways and huge trees shade the grass, making it an ideal spot to picnic or nurse. When you need to shake your sillies out, there’s an entertaining fountain and reflecting pool as well as a small climbing structure in a play area behind the Whittemore-Robbins house.

When we’ve worked up a thirst after a morning of singing at the library, we (along with much of Toddler Nation) often stop at **Carberry’s** for yummy baked goods and lunchtime sandwiches and soups. Carberry’s large indoor space includes a small table with toys and games for children. Further down Mass. Ave., **Sweet Sue’s** offers a cozy atmosphere along with coffee, baked goodies, and a nice bathroom with a changing table. For something more substantial, we head to **Krazy Karry’s** for better-than-fast-food burgers and fries in a locale where spilling your drink or dropping food on the floor doesn’t seem to bother anyone.

A visit to the center often means a quick stop at **Pink Dolly** on Medford Street for cute secondhand kids’ clothes. The selection turns over quickly, so we stop in frequently to see what’s new. Across the street, the **Book Rack** is another frequent stop for secondhand books, for

both children and adults. And when we’re feeling virtuous because we’ve saved money on clothes and books, we stroll up Mass. Ave. to **Henry Bear’s Park** to visit the toys that will one day be ours.

For kiddies in need of entertainment, the **Regent Theater** on Medford Street presents a large number of children’s shows throughout the year. I sometimes find myself impatient for my son to grow a little older so that I have an excuse to buy tickets to shows like Sing-Along Mary Poppins. For now, we content ourselves with a simpler kind of entertainment—people-watching and live music at the **Farmers Market** (May-October in the parking lot off Mystic Street).

New to Arlington Center, **Isis Maternity** offers a variety of educational classes, workshops, and groups for both expectant and experienced parents as well as fitness classes geared toward moms, babies, and toddlers. There are also weekly drop-in playgroups (free for members; \$5 for non-members). Isis offers a quiet, comfortable place to nurse, and one of the few changing tables in Arlington Center. Isis shares a building with **Wild Child**, which sells adorable clothing and shoes for children (and moms!) along with strollers and other baby gear.

Although I miss visiting nighttime Arlington Center as much as I used to, my son and I have discovered that daytime Arlington Center more than makes up for the loss.



WHERE TO

Park: street parking; Mystic Street parking lot

Play: Robbin’s Library children’s room; Whittemore-Robbins park

Get a snack: Carberry’s; Sweet Sue’s

Use the bathroom: Robbins Library; Isis Maternity

Small Steps, Big Fun is a regular feature describing the neighborhoods in and around Arlington—from a parents-with-kids perspective. Next up: Arlington Heights.

Local Events & Activities – December

For even more resources refer to <http://www.arlingtonfamilyconnection.org>

Arlington Venues

Arlington Boys and Girls Club, 60 Pond Lane, (Pleasant St. to Wellington St.). 781-648-1617. www.abgclub.org

Arlington Rec. Center & Veterans Memorial Rink, 422 Summer St. (Rt. 2A). 781-316-3880.

http://www.town.arlington.ma.us/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_Recreation/index

Fidelity House, 25 Medford St. 781-648-2005. www.fidelityhouse.org

Fox branch library, 175 Mass. Ave. (East Arlington, at Cleveland St.). 781-316-3198.

<http://www.robbinslibrary.org/html/fox.htm>

Gibbs Gym, 41 Foster St. (also accessible from Tufts St., between Mass. Ave. and Broadway). 781-316-3880.

Isis Maternity, 397 Mass. Ave., at Broadway. 781-429-1598. www.isismaternity.com

Regent Theatre, 7 Medford St. 781-646-4849. www.regenttheatre.com

Robbins Library, 700 Mass. Ave. (near Pleasant St./Rt. 60). 781-316-3234. www.robbinslibrary.org

Special Events for Families

Winter Wonderland at Lookout Farm

Thru Jan. 7 Gates open 5 pm; last train, 8:30 pm. Belkin Lookout Farm, 89 S. Pleasant St., (off Rt. 16), South Natick. \$16/adult; \$12/child; under 2, free. Orchards decorated in 2 million lights; world's longest LED tunnel; hundreds of light displays; Victorian Village; Toy Land & Fairy Land. www.lookoutfarm.com

Swimmy, Frederick, Inch by Inch 169798

Sun, Jan. 7, 1 pm and 3 pm, Leventhal-Sidman JCC, 333 Nahanton St., Newton Center. \$9/member; \$10/non-member. **For ages 3-8.** The Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia brings Leo Lionni's Caldicott Honor books, "Swimmy," "Inch by Inch," and "Frederick" to the stage with spectacular black-light puppetry. 617-558-6522. www.lsjcc.org/home/cultural_magic.html

Adventures with Alice and Friends

Sat, Jan. 13, 20, 27, 1pm, Boston Children's Theatre, 186 Tremont St. (corner Boylston), Boston. \$10/adult; \$8/children 3-12. **No children under 3 admitted; no lapsitting.** Enjoy a light snack while the actors perform among the tables for a "snack theater" experience. 617-424-6634. www.bostonchildrenstheatre.org/special_events.php

SteveSongs MLK Day Family Concert

Mon, Jan. 15, 10 am and 1 pm. Temple Emunah, 9 Piper Road, Lex. \$8/person (\$32 family limit) in advance; \$10/person (\$40 family limit) at the door. Wide range of music and selections from SteveSong's new CD "Marvelous Day." Tickets at Temple Emunah office, or Michelson's Shoes, 1780 Mass Ave., Lex. Or, send check payable to Temple Emunah pre-school and SASE, no later than Jan. 4 to: Billy Dalwin Pre-School, Temple Emunah, 9 Piper Rd, Lexington, MA 02421. Proceeds benefit the Billy Dalwin Pre-School. 781-861-0708. www.templeemunah.org

Celebrating Martin Luther King Jr.

Mon, Jan. 15, 10 am. Children's Discovery Museum, 177 Main St., Acton. \$8/person. Come

decorate with many colors; help create a multicultural paper chain in honor of Dr. King's legacy. (Museum open 9am-4:30 pm). 978-264-4200, www.discoverymuseums.org

Greenhouse Kids' Time

Mon., Jan. 15, 1-4 pm, Margaret C. Ferguson Greenhouses, Wellesley College Botanic Gardens (Park in college Gray Lot). Free, **Ages 4 and up.** Visit a tropical environment in the middle of the winter! Crafts, explorations, scavenger hunts. 781-283-3642. www.wellesley.edu/WCFH/Courses/WCFH%20FY07-edit1.pdf

Magic of Bonaparte

Mon., Jan 15, 11 am and 1 pm, Leventhal-Sidman JCC, 333 Nahanton St., Newton Center. \$7/member; \$8/non-member. Magic, comedy and surprises. 617-558-6522. www.lsjcc.org/home/cultural_magic.html

Baby Loves Disco

Sun, Jan. 28, 2-5 pm, Revolution Rock Bar, 200 High St., Boston. www.revolutionrockbar.com \$12 (non-walkers, free). Child-proof disco/dance party with "real" music by the legendary DJ kom. Healthy snacks by Wild Oats/bar available for mom & dad. Held last Sunday of the month. For tickets, www.babylovesdisco.com

Winter Wonders Walk

Sun, Jan. 28, 1:30-3:30 pm, Garden in the Woods, 180 Hemenway Rd, North Framingham. \$7/member; \$9/non-member. See a puppet show about winter survival and walk through the wintry woods. Afterwards enjoy hot drinks and a winter craft. Learn how fox, rabbits, squirrels, turtles, trees and wildflowers survive the long snowy months. Pre-registration required. 508-877-7630. www.newfs.org/courses/Child-Fam.html

Sing-alongs & Music

Mondays

5 pm. Finagle a Bagel, 91 Middlesex Tpke., Burlington. Ed Morgan performs fun original and classic children's songs. Free. 781-273-6500, www.finagleabagel.com

Tues, Jan. 23, 30

10 a.m. Robbins Library. **Babies to 36 months.** Join either Liz Buchanan or Sulinha for songs and singing games. As space is limited by size of room, numbers are given out on the day of the program beginning at 9 a.m.

Wed, Jan. 24

4-4:45 pm, Fox Library. Pixie Sticks Concert with Paula Jordan & Friends. Folk songs and music from around the world. Drop-in.

2nd & 4th Fri. of the month

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

Saturdays

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

Storytimes & Library Programs

Robbins Library/Toddlers

Mon., Jan. 22, 29, Feb. 5, 12 10:30am **18 months-2 ½ years** with an adult. Stories, rhymes, fingerplays followed by play & simple craft. Drop-in.

Robbins Library/Preschoolers

Mon., Jan. 22, 29, Feb. 5, 12. 11 am. Stories and fingerplays, followed by a craft. Drop-in.

Fox Library/Lap-sit

Tues., Jan. 9, 16, 23, 30. 10:30 am **For infants to age 2.** Brief stories, songs, games and play.

Robbins Library/Preschool and up

Tues, Jan. 9, 2:30-3 pm, preschool-age children; 3:10-3:40 pm for kindergarten and up. Audubon Ark Winter Survival program. Sign-up required. www.robbslibrary.org

Robbins Library/3-5 year olds

Wed., Jan. 24, 31, Feb. 7, 14. 10:30 am. Longer stories, rhymes, fingerplays and craft.

Fox Library/Preschool and up

Wed., Jan. 31, 4-4:45 pm. "Jaws, Paws and Claws," stories about animals by storyteller and teacher Karen Chase. For ages preschool-grade 5.

Fox Library/2 and up

Thu, Jan. 11, 18, 25. Winter story times, followed by a craft. Drop-in.

Robbins Library/Spanish

Fri, Jan. 19, 10 am. Stories in Spanish for children age 2-5. Drop-in.

Barefoot Books

Fri. & Sat. 10:30 am. **Ages 1 & up.** 1771 Mass. Ave., Camb. A fun hour of age-appropriate stories. Coloring and refreshments. Free. 617-349-1610, www.barefootbooks.com

Barnes & Noble

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

Concord Museum Story Hour

Fri., Jan. 12, 1 pm. Concord Museum, 200 Lexington Rd., Conc. **3-5 years;** adult/child program, \$5/pair, members, \$8/pair, non-members. Story (this month, "On the First Day of Winter" by Denise Fleming and "Snowballs" by Lois Ehlert.) activity, snack. Registration required. 978-369-9763.

www.concordmuseum.org

Harvard Coop

Tues & Sat., 11 am 1400 Mass. Ave., Camb. Preschool story hour with snack and craft. Free. 617-499-2000, <http://harvardbkstore.com>

Henry Bear's Park

Thurs. 11 am. **Ages 3-6.** Free. 685 Mass. Ave., Arl. 781-646-9400 and 361 Huron Ave., Camb. 617-547-8424, www.henrybear.com

RESUMED! Mornings at the Museum

Thu, Jan. 11, 10:30 am-12:30 pm, National Heritage Museum, 33 Marrett Rd., Rt. 2A, Lex. **Ages 4 and under.** \$3/child, member; \$5/child, non-member. "Anansi and the Magic Stick," the adventures of a mischievous spider; followed by making spider puppets. 781-861-6559, www.monh.org

National Heritage Museum-Storytelling/Ages 5 and up

Sun, Jan. 14, 2-4 pm, National Heritage Museum, 33 Marrett Rd., Rt. 2A, Lex. \$6/child, member, \$8/adult, member; \$8/child, non-member, \$10/adult, non-member. Professional storyteller Valerie Tutson tells tales from the African and Caribbean tradition. 781-861-6559, www.monh.org

Porter Square Books

Wed., 11 am Porter Sq. Shopping Ctr., Camb. Free. 617-491-2220, www.portersquarebooks.com

Pottery Barn Kids

Tues., 10 am Check store for details. Free. Burlington Mall. 781-221-5833.

NEW! Winterfun at Bedford Farms, Concord

Tues, 3:30-4:30 pm. 80 Thoreau St., Concord. Free. Drop-in story and arts & crafts for toddlers and preschoolers. Each week will have a different theme. 978-341-0000. www.bedfordfarmsicecream.com or bedfordfarms@comcast.net

Other Arlington Fun Stuff

Arl. Boys & Girls Club

Through Feb. 27 Tues., 10:30-11:15 a.m. Parent & Tot Drop-in Swim, \$4/child (membership required). Fri, 5:30 – 6:15 p.m., drop-in Family Swim free for members. Also offers variety of programs for ages 6 mo. & up. \$20/annual child membership, plus fee for programs. www.abgclub.org

Arlington Center for the Arts

41 Foster St., Arl. Preschool, homeschool, and after-school classes for ages 5 & up. Jewelry-making, drama & improv, drawing, painting, songwriting, pottery, cartooning, more. 781-648-6220, www.acarts.org

Fidelity House

Offers many programs for young children, including a tot playgroup (drop-in or class) Fridays at 9:30 a.m. or 10:30 a.m., \$5 drop-in, \$20/session. Also, pre-school sports, and gymnastics. No membership required for children up through kindergarten. Fees may apply for each class. www.fidelityhouse.org

UPDATED! MOMFITTERS

Thu, Jan 18- March 1. MOMswim 9:45am – 10:30am and PreMOMswim 10:30-11:15 (5 week sessions), Arl. Boys & Girls Club. For babies 4 months to 24 months and women at all stages of pregnancy. \$60 for Boys & Girls members; \$75 for non-members. Register: <http://www.abgclub.org/>

Music Together

Explore what music sounds like, looks like and feels like. 10-week classes for child and caregivers. 781-648-4084, www.musictogetherofarlington.com/

Parent and Tot Connection

Fridays, 9:30-11 a.m. Arl. Boys & Girls Club. Drop-in playgroup for toddlers and preschoolers with caregiver. Play, crafts, stories, music. Free. www.abgclub.org

UPDATED! Public Skating

Until March 16, Veterans Memorial Rink, Fri.: 11am-1pm, 2:45-4:45pm, 7-9pm; Sat.: 4-6pm; Sun.: 9:30-11:30am, 2-4pm. **Special MLK Day Skating, Mon., Jan 15, 10 am to noon.** \$3/child under 16, \$6/adult. Skating with crates allowed Fri. mornings. 781-316-3880,

www.town.arlington.ma.us/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_Recreation/rink .

Puddlestompers Playgroup

Tues. 10:30am-12:30pm. Drop-in pre-school playgroup. Occasional field trips, meets outside at playgrounds. Meets in the Fox Library in inclement weather (\$1/family donation requested). Susan, 781-641-3792 or sedorson@yahoo.com.

UPDATED! Regent Theatre Family Fun Shows

www.regenttheatre.com

Dan Grady's Marvelous Marionette

Medley, Sat., Jan. 13, 10:30 am. \$5/kids & seniors, \$7/ adults Acclaimed puppeteer, Dan Grady's colorful marionettes put on an amazing show--magnificently strutting their stuff while roller skating, tightrope walking, dancing, and more. At the end of the show, the audience is invited to the front of the stage to have personal contact (a handshake, or a hug, and for the leery, a wave or a blown kiss) with the last marionette. www.puppetmandan.com/index.htm

Wayne from Maine, Sat., Jan 20, 10:30 am. \$5/kids & seniors; \$7/adults. An interactive musical experience for the young and young at heart. Wayne, along with his percussionist JimmyJames the KoongaBoonga Man, invite volunteers to the stage to play various percussive instruments or sing into a wireless microphone. www.waynefrommaine.com.

Airborne Comedians, Sat., Jan. 27, 10:30 am. \$5/kids & seniors; \$7/adults. Adding 21st century flash to the vaudeville tradition, The Airborne Comedians' fast lines, fast hands, and incredible acrobatics bring laughter and amazement. Witness their hilarious banter as they toss, then juggle electric guitars, lawn chairs, machetes, etc. www.airbornecomedians.com

UPDATED! Toddlers and Twos
Wed. & Fri. 9:30-11am.,Jan. 17-May 4. Gibbs Gym, Tufts St. Arl. Indoor gym time for ages 15 mos-3 yrs. with parent. Drop-in for \$5/visit or purchase a punch ticket at Arl. Rec Office (422 Summer St.) for \$45/10 visits.

NEW! Together in Motion

M-F, 1-2:30pm or 2:30-4pm. Together in Motion, 1 Broadway, E. Arl. Newly opened, drop-in play space with 3 areas for: crawlers, open play; organized game. Ages 0-6. \$8/child; \$6/ea. add'l child. Frequent visit cards available. 781-643-1377.

NEW! Together in Motion

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Arlington Rec. Dept.

Offers a number of programs for children: skating, indoor gym playtime, cooking classes, arts & crafts, gymnastics, sports. www.town.Arlington.ma.us/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_Recreation/index

Artbeat Weekend Workshops

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. 781-646-2200, 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, changing diapers are never frowned upon. 204 Mass Ave., Arl. 781-648-6022. www.somervilletheatreonline.com

Isis Maternity

Programs and products for expecting parents, babies and toddlers. Infant CPR training. *AFC membership discount: 1st month free.* www.isismaternity.com

Kindermusik

Music and movement classes for parents and children ages 0-7. Refer to Website for class locations. 800-628-5687, www.kindermusik.com

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MommaStroll

Thursdays 8:30-9:30am. Meet other moms for brisk walking, simple stretching. Sign-in at Isis Maternity at 8:15am. \$4.50/ members; \$5/non-members. www.isismaternity.com

Indoor Play Spaces

Bedford Family Connection Playroom

Mon. – Fri. 9:30-11:30am. First Parish Church, 75 Great Rd., Bedford. Members: \$.50/ child; non-memb.: \$2/child. 781-275-5231, <http://mywebpages.comcast.net/rlcww/BFC.htm>

Belmont KidSpace

Mon & Thu., 1-5pm, Fri. 5-8pm, Sat. 9am-noon; 2nd, 3rd, 4th Sunday of the month, 2-5pm. Payson Park Church, 365 Belmont St., Bel. Parent-run cooperative for ages 5 and under. Membership, \$45/family/season. Single first-time visit, \$10. Donna Ruvolo, 617-489-5446; www.belmontkidspace.org.

Gymnastics Academy of Boston

Open Gym Mon.-Fri. 11:30am -1 pm; drop-in and explore. \$5/member; \$8/non-memb. 617-441-9700, www.gymnasticacademy.com

UPDATED! LPPTA WinterFun

Lexington Preschool PTA's drop-in arts and crafts program for ages 5 and under. Alternate Weds. during the school year, 9:30-11 am, Bowman School cafeteria , 9 Philip Rd., Lex. \$2/child. **Jan. 10, Winter Wonderland; Jan. 24, Chinese New Year.** Wendy Bertsekas, 781-862-1298, wkbert@mac.com. www.lppta.org.

Winterpark

Fri. 9:30-11 am; Waldorf School, 739 Mass Ave., Lex.; ages 0-3. Drop-in parent/child playgroup. \$5-\$10 donation. 781-863-1062. www.thewaldorfschool.org/home/home.asp

Winchester Rec. Playtime

Thu. 9:30-11 am. Mystic School, 263 Main St., Win. 9 mos-4 years. \$5/family. Drop-in playtime, games & toys provided. 781-721-7125.

TumbleKids Open Gym

Fri. 12:30-2pm, Winchester & Waltham locations. \$10/child. Classes also offered for add'l fee. 201 Arl. St., Watertown, 617-926-2640 and 38 River St., Winchester, 781-721-1144. www.tumblekidsusa.com/

Kids Playground

15 Normac Rd, Woburn. Indoor playground with play space, tubes & tunnels, mini golf. 781-935-2300, www.kidsplayground.com

Perpetual Motion

345 Chelmsford St., Lowell. (Off Rt. 3). Indoor playground for kids 6 & under. 978-452-0777, www.perpetualmotioninc.com

Beyond Arlington

Puppet Showplace Theatre

Sat. & Sun., 1 & 3pm shows; Wed. & Thurs. 10:30am show. 32 Station St., Brookline. Recommended for age 3 & up. Age appropriateness varies per show. \$7.50/ members, \$9.50/non-members. 617-731-6400, www.puppetshowplace.org

Babes in the Woods

Tues. 10am. Middlesex Fells. Strolls & hikes through the park. Free. 781-396-8994, www.fells.org

Home Depot Kid's Workshop

First Sat. of the month. 10am-12pm. Home Depot, 10 1st Ave., Waltham. Drop-in build-it-yourself project. Ages 2 & up, with an adult. 781-672-0900.

Play Academy

25 Riverside Ave., Medford. Offers classes for infants to age 5; drop-off program. 781-738-PLAY, www.play-academy.com/

Pre-school movies

Tuesdays, 10:30am. Cary Mem. Library, 1874 Mass. Ave., Lex. Drop-in movies for ages 2-6. Free. 781-862-6288, www.caryllibrary.org

Local Attractions

Boston Children's Museum Closed through spring 2007 for renovation/expansion.

300 Congress St., Boston. Open daily. Hands-on approach to history, science, etc.; toddler PlaySpace. www.bostonkids.org.

Children's Discovery Museum

177 Main St., Acton. Victorian house with transformed into 10 hands-on exhibit areas. Ages 6 & under. Check Website for special programs. \$8, Free/under 1. 978-264-4200, www.discoverymuseums.org

NEW! Concord Museum

200 Lexington Rd, Concord. Open daily. \$8/adults, children under 6 free. **Free admission for all, Sun., Jan. 14, 21, 1-4 pm.** Historical, literary, artistic treasures of the area. Monthly storytimes and children's programs. (978) 369-9763. www.concordmuseum.org

Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary

208 S. Great Rd, Lincoln. Explore the fields, forest and farmyard. Weekly programs for kids. Closed non-holiday Mon. Members free, \$6/Non-

memb. adult, \$4/Non-memb. ages 3-12. 781-259-2200, www.massaudubon.org

Ecotarium

222 Harrington Way, Worcester. Monthly family preschool programs. Members free, \$8/Non-member adult, \$6/Non-member ages 3-18. Explorer Express Train ride, \$2.50/person. 508-929-2700, www.ecotarium.org

Habitat Wildlife Sanctuary

10 Juniper Rd, Belmont. Trails wind through forests, across meadows, around 2 ponds, wetlands. Programs for kids. Members free, \$4/non-memb. adult, \$3/non-memb. child. 617-489-5050, www.massaudubon.org

Harvard Museum of Natural History

26 Oxford St, Cambridge. Wide array of stuffed animals in the mammal exhibit. 40ft dinosaur replica. \$7.50/adult, \$5/ages 3-18. *Note: Free 3-5pm Weds. from Sept. –May and every Sun. 9am-noon..* 617-495-3045, www.hmn.harvard.edu

Museum of Fine Arts

465 Huntington Ave., Boston. Family Place, for families with children 4 and up, interactive art activities. Wed-Fri, 3-4:45 pm; Sat-Sun, 11 am-4 pm. 617-267-9300. www.mfa.org

Museum of Science

Science Park, Boston. Open daily. Hands-on Discovery Zone, with Children's Gallery for those 5 and under. 617-723-2500. www.mos.org

National Heritage Museum

33 Marrett Rd., Rt. 2A, Lex. Great monthly programs including storytimes with crafts. 781-861-6559, www.monh.org

New England Aquarium

Central Wharf, Boston. Open daily Aqua Kids Family Days for young children on the 1st and 3rd Mondays; various Preschool Explorer programs. 617-973-5200. www.neaq.org

Stone Zoo

149 Pond St., Stoneham. Small zoo, with a petting barnyard, playground, lots of animal exhibits. \$7.50/Adult, \$4.50/Ages 2-12. 781-438-5100, www.zoonewengland.com

Take a Walk at Gore Place

52 Gore St., Waltham. Mon – Fri, 10am to 3pm (closed Mon., Jan. 1) Visit llama, sheep, goats, chickens, rabbits. Rent an "activity pack" with activities appropriate for children ages 4-9. Children's snowshoes available for rental when weather permits. Backpack rental, \$5. 781-894-2798 www.goreplace.org

Seminars & Open Houses

Lesley Ellis School Open House

Tue, Jan 9, 9:30-11am. 41 Foster St., Arl. Meet faculty, staff and parents, take a tour of the school, attend Q&A with the Head of School. Children welcome. 781-641-1346, www.leslevellis.org

Boy Talk/Girl Talk: Enhancing Masculine and Feminine Self-Worth

Tue, Jan. 16, 7-8:30 pm, Lesley Ellis School, 41 Foster St., Arl. Talk by Deborah Weinstock-Savoy of Warmlines. www.leslevellis.org

Protecting Our Children From Media Manipulation

Thu, Jan. 18, 7-8:30 pm, Hardy School cafetorium, 52 Lake St., Arl. For parents of K-12 students. Dr. Sharon Maxwell, a clinical psychologist, helps parents develop a realistic media strategy for their family, in the face of media attempts to play to the “kiddie market.” Includes protecting children from inappropriate and mindless stimulation and dealing with peer pressure.

Effective Parenting

Groups forming now. Workshop designed for parents of children 0-3. Explore different parenting topics each week. \$140/person, \$180/couple. Melissa Lucius, 781-641-4284, parenting@rcn.com or www.effective-parenting.org

Benefits

UPDATED! PTO Thrift Shop for Arl. Public Schools

Wed. 4-8 p.m., Thurs. 9:30 a.m. -1 p.m., 2nd Sat. of the month 12:30-5 p.m. **(Closed until Jan. 24; no Saturday hours in January. 50% off sale Jan 24/25 on everything in the store)** Basement of the Fox Library. Gently-used clothing for all ages, toys, books, housewares, more. 781-483-3433, www.ptothriftshop.com

Groups

40-something Moms Group

For moms of babies and/or young kids (moms-to-be welcome). Led by a licensed therapist with a specialty in women's issues, and an older mom herself. Meets monthly in North Cambridge. \$25/meeting. Suzan Wolpow, 617 441-0758 or yourclearvoice@msn.com

Arl. Area Adoption Moms

Wed, Jan. 10, 7:30 pm, Robbins Library conference room. Open to all adoptive mothers in Arlington and nearby communities. Rachel Silverman, 781-641-2947, rachelannathome@yahoo.com.

New Mothers' Group

Tues. 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Sunrise Senior Living, 24 Mall Road, Burl. Sponsored by the Parent Connection of BIDMC. Free. 8 week sessions. 617-667-2229.

Belmont Food Allergy & Asthma Support Group

Parents group meets monthly to discuss and advocate for children living with food allergies and asthma. Theresa Normile, 617-489-6668, Tnormile@foodallergyfacts.com

Breastfeeding Drop-in Group

Thurs. 1pm. Isis Maternity, Free. For nursing moms and babies. Staffed by certified lactation consultant. www.isismaternity.com

Drop-in Playgroups

Non-mobile babies – Thurs., 3:30pm
Mobile babies – Weds, 3:30pm
Isis Maternity, Free for Isis members, \$5/non-members. www.isismaternity.com (Please note, new days; same times.)

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. 781-316-3410.

La Leche League

An int'l, nonprofit, org. dedicated to providing education, info. and support to breastfeeding women. Arl. meetings at Fox Library at 7:30 p.m. on the 3rd Tues. of ea. month. One morning meeting is held in Camb. on 2nd Thurs. of the month at 10 a.m., 175 Harvey St., Cambridge. Free. Heather 781-648-2988, <http://home.comcast.net/~jrsladkey/III/index.html> For listing of Mass. Leagues, www.llusa.org/MARIVT/Massachusetts.html

Learn & Play Adoption Group

1st Wed. of month, 10-11:30am. Sept.–June. Community Agencies Bldg., Emerson Hosp., 111 Old Rd. to 9 Acre Corner, Concord. For parents and adopted children 0 - 5 yrs. Facilitated by First Connections. Registration requested. \$30. 978-287-0221, www.jri.org/cfys/

New Moms Group

Wednesdays, 11am. Beaver Brook Pediatrics, 411 Waverly Oaks Rd., Waltham. Free sessions run for 5 weeks. 781-891-3706.

New Mothers' Drop-in Group

Fri. 10-11:30am, Calvary United Methodist Church, 300 Mass Ave., Arl. Free, nonsectarian, facilitated group. Sponsored by Jewish Family & Children's Svcs. 617-558-1278.

Older First-Time Moms

Third Wed. of ea. month, 7 p.m. Fox Library. Social and support group for first-time moms in their late 30's and 40's. Free. \$1 donation suggested. 781-674-2029.

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- Give all toys a “home.” In common rooms such as the living room, use low bookshelves, covered baskets, or cabinets. In your child's room, use containers such as clear bins or toy chests, open baskets or bins, and shelves. Be sure children can reach the storage area, or the toys won't go back. If you have more toys than homes, you will need to continue to sort and purge.
- Help your children get in the habit of putting toys back in their home by spending a few minutes cleaning up every day. Make a game of it, the sillier the better. Recently I got my daughter to put all of her blocks in their container by pretending it was a hungry monster which needed to be fed blocks!

- Consider the “one-in/one-out” rule: When a new toy enters your home, find one that can be donated or stored somewhere else.
- Rotate some of your toys: Periodically put some toys that aren't current favorites in a box to be stored in the attic or a closet. A few months later, bring them back – they may be more interesting after your child hasn't seen them for a while.

If you control the number of toys, give all toys homes, and help children get into the habit of putting them away, cleaning up can be a snap—even if you aren't Mary Poppins.

Elizabeth Goodsell is the mother of a three-year-old, and founder of That's Neat! (www.thatsneatorganizing.com), providing organizing services for the home and home office.

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

January, 2007

AFC Membership/Renewal Form

New member **Renewal** Date: _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email Address(es): _____

Newsletter Delivery Preference:

US Mail Email Both

Would you like to get occasional AFC email?

Yes No, please send the newsletter only

Please list your child(ren): (if applicable)

Name Gender Date of Birth (mo/year)

School District:

(circle one for geographic location)

Bishop Brackett Dallin Hardy

Peirce Stratton Thompson Out-of-Town

Volunteer and Activity Interests

(check all that apply)

Events/Parties New Parent Outreach
 Newsletter Outings with Kids Playgroups
 Outings without Kids Seminars Web Site
 Email Bulletin Childcare & Preschool Options
 Publicity Membership Working Moms
 Community Service Kindergarten Connections
 Treasurer/Clerk Other _____

Would you like to be contacted about volunteering?

Yes No

Membership Fees: All memberships renew in September, 2007.

Please circle the month you are joining:

\$20 (August/September/October)
\$15 (November/December/January)
\$10 (February/March/April)
\$5 (May/June/July)

Please mail membership form and check to:

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