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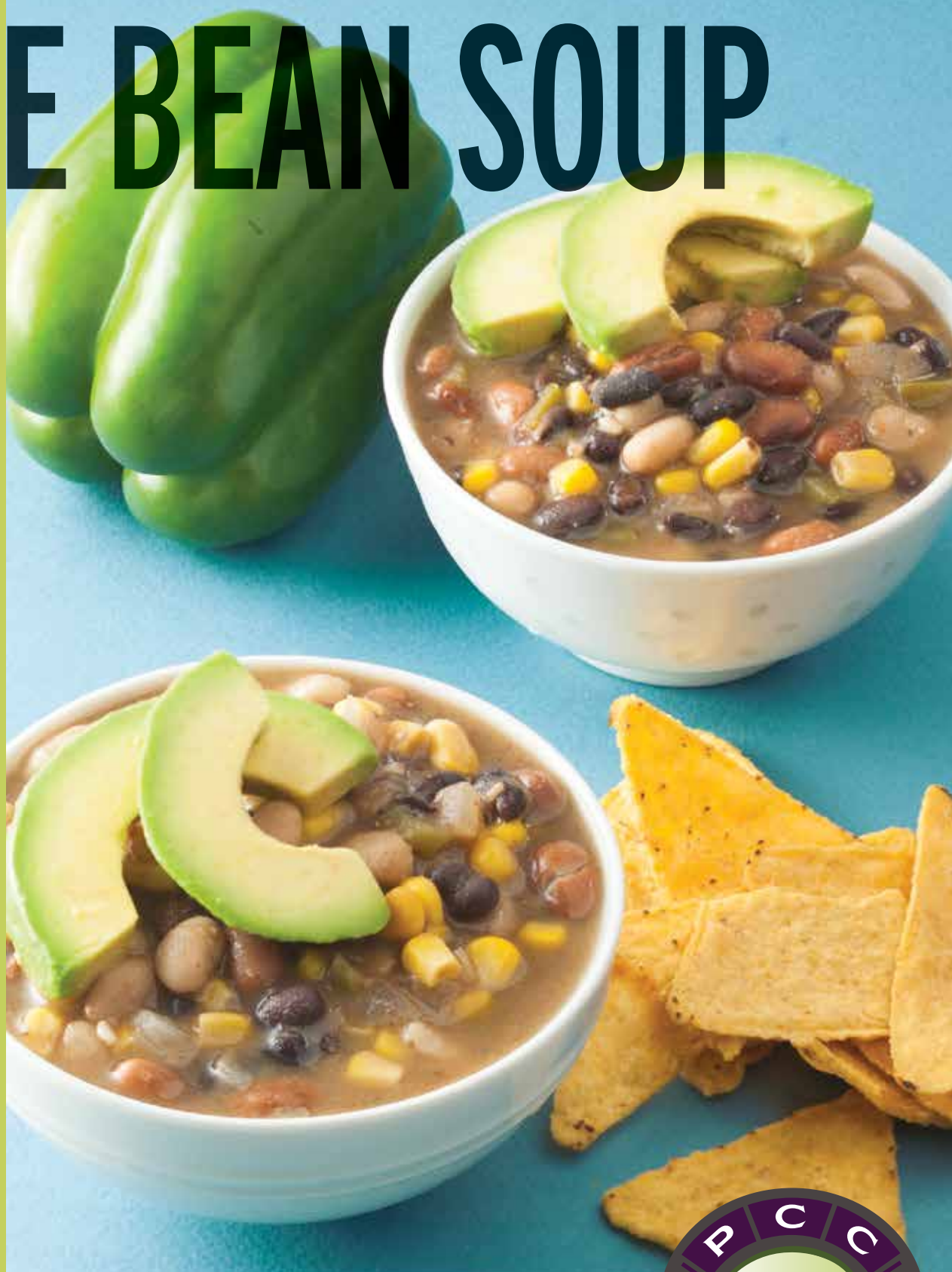
As the evenings get cooler and you settle into the back-to-school schedule, the time is right for quick, hearty and healthy meals. Our Three Bean Soup is just the ticket, with a mildly Mexican twist that's part minestone and part tortilla soup. PCC Chef Jackie Freeman uses Field Day pantry staples to stir things up! Find the video and recipe at pccnaturalmarkets.com/healthykids.



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navigate great stuff daily!



Best back-to-school ever!

The school year has sprung! And with it, questions about homework battles, best backpacks and how to pack a lunch your kids will actually eat. We have tips and strategies from the experts and from parents just like you, plus the details on schools and open houses. New ideas daily. parentmap.com/education

Come for the pictures, stay for the story

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Pike Place: More than just fish

Totally over Pike Place? We get it. Then we chatted with a fishmonger's wife, who gave us the behind-the-scenes scoop on one of Seattle's most famous tourist destinations. Follow her five tips to make your next visit about more than just fish. parentmap.com/pike-place



Fall films

Our fall Parentmap events calendar is live! First up: Our Wednesday, Sept. 21, screening of *The Mask You Live In*, a must-watch for anyone interested in raising a healthier generation of men. Buy tickets today.

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Breakfast hero

We all know it: the morning scramble. You want your child to get to school in time so you can get on with your day, and you want her to eat a good breakfast that will power her through her day. Never fear, superparent! We've got you covered with breakfast ideas galore, just in the nick of time. parentmap.com/breakfast-ideas

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dear reader

Future forecast: a promising generation

You know those parents who can't wait for summer to end? I'm not that parent — not one little bit.

Sadly, the overly structured workplaces that most parents enter and exit daily is a lousy match for kids who want to just chill out during summer break. That in mind, I understand a parent's need to have order replace summer's carefree chaos. I feel it too — that desire to be busy — even as I mourn the end of the season.

Speaking of busy, our magnificent middle child, Eli (pictured right) just headed off to Washington, D.C., to earn a joint degree in law and foreign policy. We're beaming with pride, of course. But not just because he is at law school and wants to positively impact our world, but because he exemplifies how one can gracefully and elegantly move beyond life's obstacles (a slightly overbearing Jewish mama for starters).

Eli is an outstanding role model to his sisters, parents and his peers because he is humble, self-effacing and a hard-working change agent with a light footprint. After college he spent a captivating year working in New York at the district attorney's office where he decided law is his calling.

He looks happy on his first day of school, right? We're thrilled for him and support his career interests yet know that the days of having our exceptionally sweet son living in our home have faded as his brilliant future emerges.

Fittingly, this month's feature takes us into the courtroom. Around the country, children are suing for the environment and asserting their rights to live in a healthy and sustainable world, ("Raising kids in a warming world," p. 15). Even better news: They're winning! It's inspiring that our children's and grandchildren's brilliant future on this beautiful but warming planet is being challenged by none other than kids.

So this fall, as you have your family back-to-school planning session, consider how to reduce your family's carbon footprint. As local dad and

climate change activist Michael Foster puts it: "We feel the most powerful and joyful when we take action on climate. We know we're doing this for someone besides ourselves. It's about the next generation."



Michael Foster





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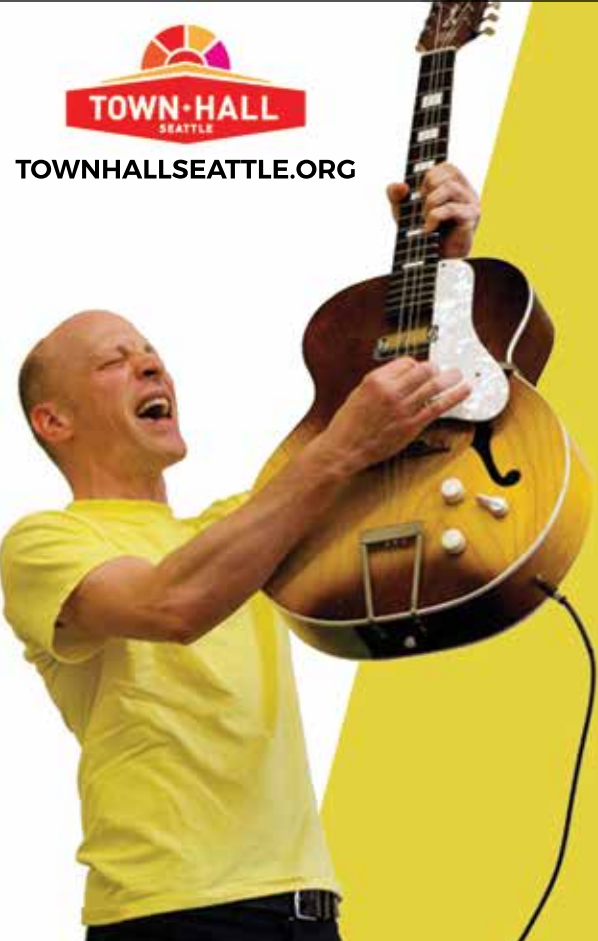
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Kids learn citizen science

Bird tracking, squirrel monitoring, belly buttons and more

By Rebecca Hill

In the Victorian era, people would celebrate Christmas with side hunts, during which they would shoot and kill birds and other wildlife. But in December 1900, ornithologist Frank Chapman, founder of *Bird-Lore* (which later became the National Audubon Society magazine *Audubon*) decided that counting birds was a much better idea than killing them. So he organized a Christmas Bird Census. Twenty-seven birders participated and 25 total bird counts were held that Christmas Day.

Since then, the Audubon Society has continued this tradition each year. Thousands of volunteers young and old hazard the rain, sleet and snow to collect data on bird populations. In 2014, volunteers counted 68 million birds of 2,106 different species. The data, gathered from North America and across the globe, have been used by scientists to evaluate bird populations, migratory routes, species decimation and habitats — and all this thanks to volunteers who are citizen scientists.

What is citizen science?

Before the 17th century, men and women did not specialize in science. They made their livings in other professions. But at that time, there was a handful of men who liked to gather and talk about science each Thursday afternoon at the Bull-Head Tavern in Cheapside, London. Benjamin Franklin was there. Philosopher Robert Boyle, architect Sir Christopher Wren and others were also members. Later to become known as the Royal Society, these meetings became the place where science could be discussed and explored communally by those who were inclined; it was the center of Darwinian debate, and a clearinghouse for cutting-edge ideas and exhibits about the natural world.

Now, citizen science is a way for people like you, me and our kids to contribute to science through volunteerism. Ordinary citizen scientists have applied their efforts to global climate change, endangered species, national weather observations, ornithology, outer space, critter counts, marine life, ant tracking and yes, even

the biomes of belly buttons. The miracle is that all the data that these volunteers collect and then share with scientists amount to real scientific change, something that a lone scientist in the lab cannot do.

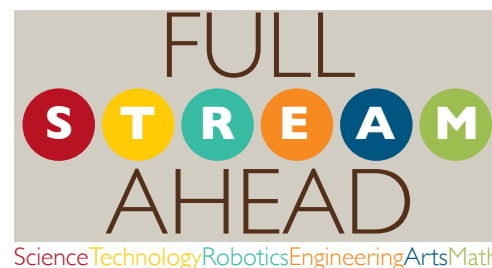
And today, technology makes collecting and sharing data easier. As a result, citizen science has blossomed. For instance, eBird is an online data collection point for the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (CLO). There, citizen scientists contribute the information they collect in their communities, states and even their own backyards. Check out its live data submissions to see how it works (ebird.org/ebird/livesubs).

So why is it important for volunteers to be involved in the science process as citizen scientists?

- 1 Often, large-scale scientific projects require help.** For instance, sudden oak death in oak trees is caused by a fungus that has killed millions of California trees. A recent study in *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* found that the involvement of trained high school students, teachers and other volunteers over the past six years enabled researchers to learn more about the spread of the disease, and how they could develop predictive risk maps and to give information to arborists making decisions about the disease.
- 2 Science is a field that is dependent on grants and other types of variable funding, which may leave nothing left for extra help.**



BirdSleuth: 3 kids getting ready to do an eBird count



Editor's note: Science, technology, robotics, engineering, art and math: In our schools and communities, there is more demand than ever for STREAM. Yet only about a third of eighth-graders score "proficient" in math and science. In this ongoing series, sponsored this month by **Girl Scouts of Western Washington**, we'll explore how schools and organizations are approaching STREAM in new, game-changing ways.



So citizen scientists, as volunteers, help mitigate the financial burden that scientists may bear when collecting and recording data.

- 3 Because scientists can't be everywhere at once, sometimes volunteers learn things that scientists had never discovered.** For instance, in 1997, the class of Diane Petersen, a science teacher at Waterville Elementary School in Washington, documented increased sightings of short-horned lizards, or horny toads, on rural Washington farmland where previously there had been fewer than 100 sightings. Through the now nonoperational University of Washington and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's NatureMapping program, these students compiled their observations and research into a paper that was presented at the Wildlife Society's 2000 Northwest Section meeting, where their data was accepted by the scientific community.

4 Finally, citizen science makes science accessible to everyone.

When a school, community or a group of people volunteers for science, it is a reminder that science is a part of



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stream

Citizen science

continued from page 11

our daily lives and that it impacts everything around us. In a 1957 commentary titled "Science and the Citizen," Warren Weaver of the Rockefeller Center summed it up best:

"No longer is it an intellectual luxury to know a little about this great new tool of the mind called science. It has become a simple and plain necessity that people in general have some understanding of this, one of the greatest of the forces that shape our modern lives. We must know — all of us must know — more about what science is and what it is not."

Citizen science in our backyard and beyond

In the state of Washington and across the U.S., citizen science is a flourishing force that shapes the minds of our citizens. In Washington, some projects, such as the Pacific Biodiversity Institute's Harbor Porpoise Monitoring Project or its Western Gray Squirrel Project, are generally open only to adults and college-age students, says Anna Hallingstad, citizen science coordinator for the institute. But plenty of citizen science opportunities exist for individual schools, teen and children volunteers.

In Seattle, citizen science is alive and well at the **Seattle Aquarium**, where students receive training from experienced field researchers monitoring intertidal areas in central Puget Sound on low-tide days from April through May. Working with approximately 400 high school students from 13 schools, this program gathers data on 24 marine species. That data, in turn, are made available to university, governmental and not-for-profit institutions for the purposes of scientific endeavors. The aquarium's citizen science program works in partnership with local high school students and teachers, says

Nicole Ivey, the program's coordinator since January 2014.

"It engages students in doing real science and helping us learn new things about the world around us," says Ivey. "The majority of science experiences for school-aged students include learning about past discoveries from a textbook or engaging in science labs with defined steps and predetermined solutions." Having this experience to engage in real science, says Ivey, excites students and teachers.

The aquarium also has a **Beach Naturalist Program**. Students and their teachers go to the beach at low-tide times on school days to investigate what's on the beach. In 2015, the program hosted 107 schools, says Janice Mathisen, program coordinator. Although the program does not collect data, it is a great opportunity for younger students to experience citizen science.

Also in Seattle, the University of Washington's Botanic Gardens sponsor the annual **BioBlitz**, an intense biological survey for which citizen scientists are encouraged to record all the living species, from fungi to mollusks to plants to birds, within a chosen area over a designated time period. Often called a biological census or inventory, the activity is another chance to get the public involved in the biodiversity of a particular area.

Alicia Blood, youth and family education supervisor for the Botanic Gardens, believes that the BioBlitz is a great way for young people to explore the natural world and think like a scientist. "I think that we often look at the natural world around us on a macro level, and opportunities such as our BioBlitz allows you to dig a little deeper and see how much life there is right in front of us," says Blood.

Families are introduced to the idea on a Friday evening and on Saturday they can participate by taking guided

walks to investigate the Washington Park Arboretum. This year's BioBlitz focused on birds and the ponds at the Botanic Gardens.

The Pacific Education Institute (PEI) in Olympia sponsors **FieldSTEM**, which is a set of guided investigations, projects and reporting done outdoors. "We have 30 school districts that are planning and implementing a project . . . [with an] environment, agriculture and natural resource focus," says Margaret Tudor, executive director of PEI.

School districts are also encouraged to customize their own FieldSTEM, says Tudor. For example, in Shelton, Washington, the focus is on Puget Sound, forests and shellfish. Other PEI opportunities for school districts include working with the Washington Invasive Species Council on invasives; the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's photo-point monitoring and habitat data statewide project; and the Columbia River Watershed project The River Mile, which seeks crayfish, plant and animal data from schools in the watershed, Tudor says.

Youth citizen science programs are flourishing across the nation. North Carolina State University's **Students Discover** is a collaboration with the Department of Ecology and offers programs on topics that range from an ant tracker to invasive mosquitoes to belly button biodiversity. Free, downloadable lesson plans are available to teachers and provide a classroom map for citizen science, all of which follow the Next Generation Science Standards and Common Core State Standards.

What Students Discover is most interested in is doing citizen science to scale, says Lea Shell, curator of digital media for Students Discover. "We hope to get people interested in science and work with highly

motivated science teachers who are interested in communicating the science experience and doing actual science in the classroom."

Another opportunity is **BirdSleuth**. A K-12 inquiry-based citizen science program, BirdSleuth engages students in scientific study, investigation and data collection on bird populations and conservation. Among its programs are Project FeederWatch, the Great Backyard Bird Count, YardMap and NestWatch, all of which contribute data through the CLO's online eBird database.

Teachers can access free downloads such as the BirdSleuth Explorer's Guidebook and can lead programs that encourage their students to submit to the annual *BirdSleuth Investigator* magazine, which features student reports, artwork and poetry. BirdSleuth also offers citizen science lesson-plan kits for educators.

"When teachers tell their students that their data is going into a database that scientists are using to understand [bird] conservation choices, habitat and [species] population protection, kids think that it's really cool," says Jennifer Fee, K-12 program manager for BirdSleuth.

Citizen science not only offers an opportunity for all of us to get involved in what's happening around us, but it's a reminder that we are important to the process. As Weaver points out, "Our daily lives are surrounded by problems with scientific implications . . . don't you think that the time has come when you must give a damn about science?" ■

Rebecca Hill is a freelance writer who writes about education, literacy, libraries, parenting/family and science.

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Raising kids in a warming world

How climate experts juggle the globe's **climate emergency** and their hopes for their kids

BY ELISABETH KRAMER

A baby born today will be 34 in 2050. By then, her Seattle won't look like your Seattle. Her summers will be 80 degrees on average and dry most of the time. She'll go hiking earlier in the season than her parents did, which almost makes up for the fact that during most winters she won't be able to go skiing. She'll avoid the Olympic Sculpture Park (too much flooding), wonder what an oyster tastes like (too much acidification) and see some amazing sunsets (too much smog).

Or maybe not. In a world that's undoubtedly getting warmer because of humans, predicting anything is still far from easy. But if any one group is qualified to lay odds, it's climate scientists and activists. They spend years sharing numbers that translate into changes our planet hasn't seen in millennia. Then, a great many of them go home to toddlers.

So if such people — those arguably on the “front lines” of climate change — are still having kids and populating a fragile planet, what does that mean for the rest of us? >>



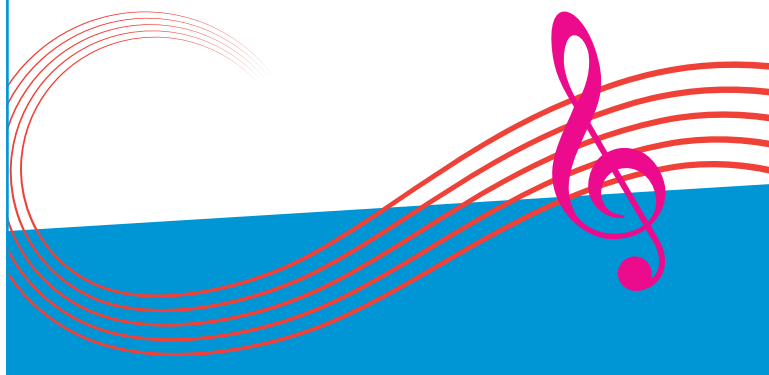


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Raising kids in a warming world

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Poking the climate

Parenting takes the long view, but perhaps not as long as climate history. Sarah Myhre, mother of a 3-year-old boy, is an ocean and climate scientist at the University of Washington (UW), where she spends her days studying the past 20,000 years of the earth's gases, geology and global shifts.

"The things that we think are stable, aren't," she says of her work. "When you poke the climate system with a sharp stick, things change really rapidly."

So rapidly that within her toddler's lifetime, Myhre expects a much different Pacific Northwest than the one her family has called home for five generations. "The things that I identify with — cold oceans, green trees, mountains filled with snow — those are the things that teach me about who I am. And those things are on the table."

This likely isn't news to you; 40 percent of Americans report hearing about climate change in the media at least once a month, and nearly half of us are concerned about what we're hearing.

The numbers are higher — much higher — for those who have already lived through a climate catastrophe. Take Hurricane Katrina, a storm that cost more than \$100 billion and was likely greatly intensified by climate change. More than half of the survivors, many of them single African-American mothers, exhibited PTSD symptoms. Some of them saw no way forward. Following Katrina, suicide attempts among survivors jumped to 79 times the regional average.

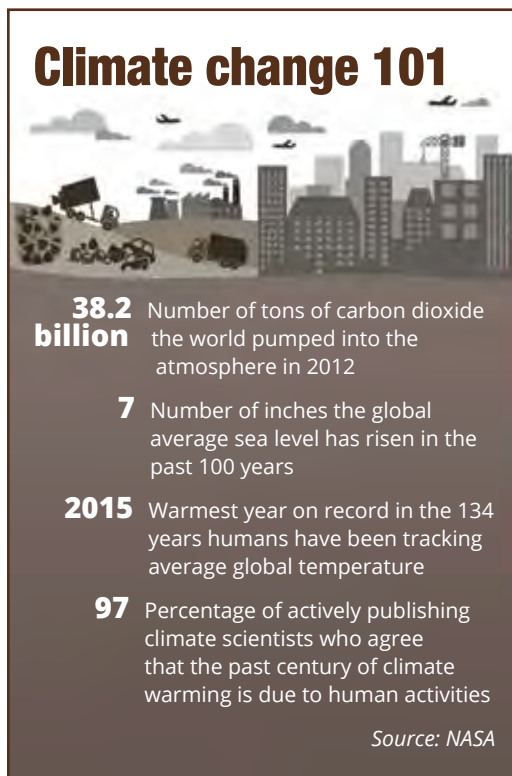
When worlds collide

OK — let's take a deep breath. That is a lot of doom and gloom to take in, and unfortunately, doom and gloom makes us freeze. It's not our fault. It's our psychology.

In fact, it's a state known as "disavowal." George Marshall, author of *Don't Even Think About It: Why Our Brains Are Wired to Ignore Climate Change*, describes disavowal as living in "a state of both knowing and not knowing."

Anna Fahey knows all about that. She has spent the past decade working professionally to get people to pay attention. It's not exactly uplifting.

"You have to compartmentalize," says Fahey, a mother of two who develops climate messaging as director of strategic communication for the



sustainability nonprofit Sightline Institute. "Climate change is big and scary, and when you look at your kids every day, it's just like thinking of car crashes. You can't look at them and think of that or you'll drive yourself batty."

She's done it once or twice already. One day, Fahey's then 5-year-old daughter asked what exactly Mommy was working on at home. Fahey's typical explanations — "Just something for work" or "I've got a report to finish" — didn't satisfy. Her daughter wanted answers.

"I ended up with tears streaming down my face," Fahey says. "It felt like two worlds colliding: the world of my work and the way I think about solutions for her generation, and the world of her questioning as the real-life person in front of me."

So how do we survive those colliding worlds? How do we feel anything but impotent about climate change? How do we look at our kids — or even decide to have them — with all this running through our minds? Simple: We talk about it.

"It's kind of like talking about the monster under the bed," says Seattle mental health counselor Michael Foster. "Once you talk about the monster under the bed, you're not so scared. Now you've talked about it, and we can do

something about it. It makes it less crazy-making."

Foster started talking in earnest in October 2012 when he began presenting a slideshow about climate change to Seattle-area schools. He has since given presentations to more than 10,000 students. The response, he says, is always positive.

"We feel the most powerful and joyful when we take action on climate," he says. "We know we're doing this for someone beside ourselves. It's about the next generation."

Suing for their futures

That next generation, by the way, isn't waiting for a fix. Enter *Zoe and Stella Foster, et al. v. Washington Department of Ecology*. The state Superior Court case, which involves seven Washington state kids including Foster's two teenagers, is part a "hatch of cases" filed on Mother's Day 2011.

Oregon-based nonprofit Our Children's Trust (OCT) led the coordinated effort to realize a specific legal school of thought: If the legislative and executive branches aren't doing anything about climate change (or, at least, not quickly enough for it to matter), enact change through the judicial.

To date, OCT has launched 20 cases across the country, including one on the federal level. All aim to create legally binding climate recovery plans, or plans with the goal of reducing carbon dioxide concentrations in order to hit 350 parts per million (ppm) by the end of the century. That 350 is an important number; it's what the majority of climate scientists say we need to get back to in order to enter "a safe zone." We're currently at just over 400 ppm.

For Andrea Rodgers, lead prosecutor on *Foster v. Ecology*, the OCT cases stand for more than science. They represent common sense.

"As parents, we do our best to set our children up for a successful life," says Rodgers, the mother of a 5- and an 8-year-old. "I think leaving them a planet where they won't have global climate catastrophes is not an unreasonable request."

In May, King County Superior Court Judge Hollis Hill agreed. She ordered the Washington State Department of Ecology to create a rule regulating carbon dioxide emissions by the end of this year and became, Rodgers says, "the first judge in the United States to order an agency to

Raising kids in a warming world

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regulate carbon dioxide emissions.”

In her ruling, Judge Hill explained her reasoning: “These children can’t wait, the polar bears can’t wait, the people of Bangladesh can’t wait. I don’t have jurisdiction over their needs in this matter, but I do have jurisdiction in this court.”

Ecology has since begun the court-mandated rulemaking process, which is open to the public. Rodgers encourages parents to send a letter to Ecology environmental planner Sam Wilson or directly to the governor.

“Comments such as ‘You need to make a rule based on science that protects my kid’ is a message Ecology needs to hear,” Rodgers says.

Time, she adds, is of the essence. In 2014, our state needed to reduce emissions by 4 percent per year; because we didn’t, that annual number has jumped to 8 percent. It’s been two years.

Cute little babies

Talking does more than inspire lawsuits.

“It’s important not only for our own mental health, but because what drives social change isn’t [getting] everybody on board,” Fahey of Sightline Institute said in a 2013 speech. “In fact, an intensely committed minority can act as an amazingly powerful lever that shifts the rest of the population.”

She’s right. Science shows that the tipping point for public opinion is a mere 10 percent — a number we already have when it comes to climate change. What we don’t have is the “intensely committed” part of the equation.

But, as one climate scientist put it, “There’s nothing like a cute little baby to bring up the emotional side of climate change.” Little League, PTA, Cub Scouts — parents find themselves easily devoted to a cause as long as they think it furthers their kids’ futures.

That’s why Seattle mom Abigail Brockway stood in front of a coal train.

Brockway’s daughter, Sienna, is 14, but when she was younger, she loved going to Carkeek Park. Every time the train



OUR CHILDREN'S TRUST

rolled through, Brockway would scoop Sienna up and they’d run to the nearby bridge *spanning* the tracks to feel the vibration rattle them like a roller-coaster.

“Then we started to notice these dark, miles-long, uncovered coal trains,” Brockway says. “We got concerned.”

Washington state plaintiffs, including Gabe Mandell, (center) celebrate alongside attorney Andrea Rodgers

Concern turned to action when in July 2014, a train carrying crude oil derailed under the Magnolia Bridge. It didn’t explode, but the “what if” alone shocked Brockway. “My daughter’s school was just on the edge of that blast zone,” she says. “It was too close to home.”

Two months later, on Sept. 2, 2014, Brockway and four other members of what became known as the Delta 5 committed what she calls “an act of civil disobedience.” They went to an Everett rail yard and erected a metal tripod in front of a parked train filled with oil from North Dakota and bound for Anacortes. Brockway stood atop the tripod while the other four bound themselves to it. Then, they waited — for eight hours. With them: a petition calling for Gov. Jay Inslee to establish a moratorium against fossil fuel projects in Washington state.

Because of that day, Brockway spent 24 hours in jail, was convicted of misdemeanor trespassing and is on probation for two years. Inslee, meanwhile, did call for the moratorium (in June, following the derailment of an oil train in Oregon).

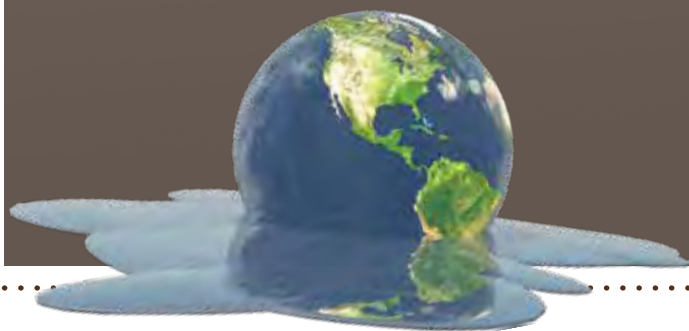
Of course, you don’t have to stand in front of trains to advocate for change. Parents have more power than they know in shaping how their families talk about and deal with climate change.

“For our children, there are going to be problems that they have to face that we haven’t even realized are problems yet,” says UW assistant professor of oceanography Alex C. Gagnon. So,

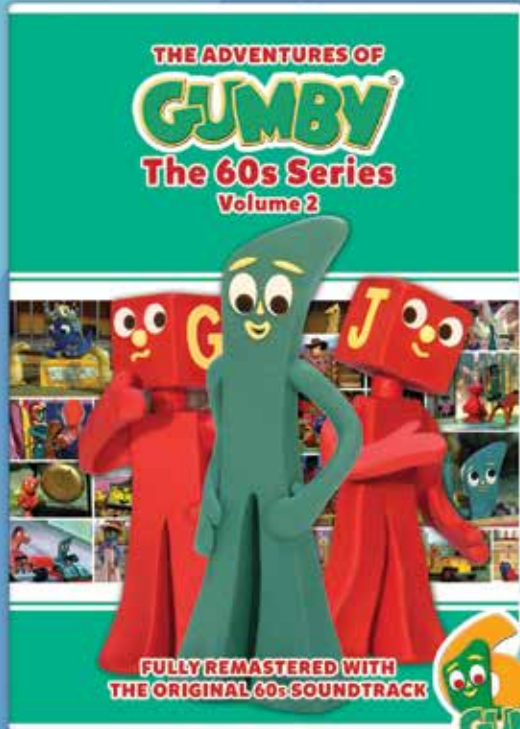
3 tips from a climate kid

Plaintiff in *Foster v. Ecology*, president of Plant for the Planet Seattle and 14-year-old Gabe Mandell offers three suggestions to get your family involved:

- 1 Join a young people’s environmental organization like Plant for the Planet.** We’re a group led by children ages 9 and up, supported by families. Look us up on the website Climate Change for Families (climatechange4families.com/blog). We meet the first Friday of every month, and have lots of fun and important activities.
- 2 Reduce your family’s carbon footprint.** This includes things like taking public transportation, biking to school, drying your clothes on a clothesline instead of a dryer and eating less meat. (Tip: Try “Meatless Mondays” to get started.)
- 3 Take action today to cut Washington state’s carbon emissions.** Join other children in writing letters to our legislators and to businesses asking them to help in this effort. Contact Alec Connon (alecconnon@gmail.com) for additional information.



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Raising kids in a warming world

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he says, go back to the basics: "If you can give kids a foundation that makes them feel connected, [makes them] critical thinkers and [makes them] think the world is a place of wonder . . . that seems much more important to me than getting them to fix one particular problem."

That last part — instilling a sense of wonder — particularly matters to Gagnon, the father of a 2-year-old and a newborn.

"The world is this incredibly beautiful, amazing, complex place," he says. "Sharing that beauty, that complexity, sharing that wonder fits very naturally with parenting."

Feel your feelings

Cold oceans, green trees, mountains filled with snow — when Myhre imagines her toddler living without them, a feeling of loss wells up in her chest. It's a great, sinking sadness typically reserved for other humans or,

sometimes, beloved pets. We often dismiss such feelings when they relate to something as vast and — we tell ourselves — inconsequential as nature. But ignoring that grief does us no good.

"Feel your feelings, man," Myhre says. "Feel your feelings so that you can get to the other side, so that you can burn down the parts of you that need to go in order to rise through this and be stronger."

Stronger, she says, so we can better raise our children for an unpredictable world, a world where they may not go skiing or eat oysters or know a smog-free skyline, but where what matters most will never change.

"In a future of climate warming, there are a lot of things at risk . . . things that are really scary when you contemplate the kinds of sacrifices that are down the road for us," Myhre says. "But here's the thing: In that future, we will still be family. We will still love each other. The things that make life worth living will still be there, and nothing can take that away." ■

One family's climate quest

When writer Michael Lanza realized how rapidly climate change was altering our national parks, he got busy. Read a Q&A with Lanza about his family's yearlong climate adventure at parentmap.com/climatequest.

Born in Seattle and raised in Portland, Elisabeth Kramer graduated from the University of Oregon with a degree in magazine editing and writing. She currently serves as assistant editor at ParentMap.

A R T S + A C T I V I T I E S

How your home can help with homework

It's all about location, location, location, right? Apply that logic to your student's homework time this year. By organizing his study time you'll also organize yours. Win-win!

To get started, consider shelves.

By loading your kid's room with shelving, you immediately create easy organization to kick off the new school year. Plus, well-placed shelves are great space savers that might even mean less clutter.

Next, what about a desk?

The idea may seem old school but a desk can actually help your student focus. When she sits there, she's got work to do. Desks with drawers and shelves are preferable but don't go too crazy on fancy office supplies. Coffee mugs and small kitchen bowls do the job just as well.

Finally, post a schedule.

Some families use bulletin boards. Others prefer chalkboards. Even more turn to scheduling apps. Whatever the medium, the goal's the same: Stay organized.

Learn more at parentmap.com/school-organization. —Houzz

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High-flying: Cirque de la Symphonie performs with Seattle Symphony Oct. 7-9

Fabulous fall family arts

20-plus shows to make families laugh, cry and sing this autumn

BY NANCY CHANEY AND ELISA MURRAY

Why splurge on — or even make time for — the arts? That question is especially hard to answer in the fall, when families' schedules simmer with school, sports and homework. But we'd argue that carving out a few hours for a musical, a dance performance or just an old-fashioned singalong is just as important as other commitments. Here's a sampling of 23 shows to choose from; find more at parentmap.com/fallarts and parentmap.com/calendar. (Note: We include the times for performances that just have one show but not for shows with multi-day runs.)

September

Ghosts of Gasoline

Locations around Seattle

Sept. 1–Oct. 2

Want a little climate activism with your theater this fall? This provocative performance piece takes viewers on a futuristic journey about the impact of the everyday toxin known as gasoline, complete with yes, gasoline ghosts. See it at Seattle's First Thursday Art Walk (Sept. 1), Bumbershoot (Sept. 2-3), Seattle Design Festival (Sept. 10-11), a Wallingford Shell station (Sept. 21) and as part of a city-wide procession on No Gasoline Day (Oct. 2). **Free. All ages. [>>](http://cultura.org)**



Ghosts of Gasoline

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PICKS

Washington State Fair, Puyallup, Sept. 2-25



Olympia Harbor Days, Sept. 2-4



Issaquah Salmon Hatchery self-guided tours, daily



The Mask You Live In film screening, Sept. 21, Mercer Island




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Science Block Party
at Seattle Children's Research Institute
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www.seattlechildrens.org/scienceblockparty

Purchase a T-Bear to support pediatric cancer research
September 1-30, 2016
Albertsons and Safeway stores in Washington

Pick up a t-bear—an adorable plush teddy bear toy—from Albertsons and Safeway as you grocery shop this September. Proceeds support Strong Against Cancer, which provides funding for childhood cancer research and clinical trials. For more information about the science behind this innovative new treatment and how you can get involved, visit strongagaincancer.org.

4

Calls of the Wild. Play a squirrel game among other activities to learn about the sounds and tasks animals perform getting ready for fall. Saturday–Monday, Sept. 3–5. Included with admission. Northwest Trek, Eatonville. nwtrek.org
Bicycle Sunday. Last month to enjoy car-free riding by the lake; helmets required. Sundays through Sept. 25, 10 a.m.–6 p.m. **FREE.** Lake Washington Boulevard, Seattle. seattle.gov/parks/bicyclesunday

5

Jetty Island Trash Bash and Closing Ceremony. This season's last chance to visit Everett's sandy, man-made island; help with clean-up and meet Smokey Bear. Noon–4:30 p.m. \$1–\$2 donation for ferry. Jetty Island, Everett. everettwa.gov
Summer Concerts at the Locks. Relax on a blanket or stroll the lovely gardens while you listen live music. Sept. 3–5 and 17, 2 p.m. **FREE.** Hiram M. Chittenden Locks, Seattle. nws.usace.army.mil **ONGOING EVENT**

6

Live at Lunch. Last few days of live music at various spaces around Bellevue; today it's the Brian Feist Blues Duo. Tuesday–Thursday, Sept. 6–8, noon–1:30 p.m. Key Center, Bellevue. downtownbellevue.com **ONGOING EVENT**
Pool Playland. Last few days for parent and tot swim time in the warm pool. Daily, 11 a.m.–noon through Sept. 11. \$3.75–\$5.25; under 1 free. Ages 0–5 with caregiver. Pop Mounser Pool, Seattle. seattle.gov/parks/aquatics **ONGOING EVENT**

11

Grandparents' Day at HOCM. Grandmas and grandpas are half price all month and **FREE** today for Grandparents' Day. 11 a.m.–5 p.m. Ages 1–10 with families. Hands On Children's Museum, Olympia. hocm.org
Live Aloha Hawaiian Cultural Festival. Hawaiian music and dance performances, workshops, local food vendors, activities for kids and more. 11 a.m.–7 p.m. **FREE.** Seattle Center. seattlelivealohafestival.com

12

Toys of the '50s, '60s and '70s. Last few weeks to see E-Z Bake Ovens, Skipper dolls, Gummy and more nostalgic toys. Daily through Sept. 25. Included with admission. Museum of History & Industry, Seattle. mohai.org
Luke's Kids Drop-in Play Time. Tots and their grown-ups meet up to play at this Ballard church. Mondays, 10 a.m.–noon. \$5 suggested donation. Ages 0–5 with caregiver. St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Seattle. stlukesseattle.org **ONGOING EVENT**

13

Happy Babies Educational Support Group. Help and support for the transition to parenthood. Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.–noon. \$10–\$16. Babies to 12 months with caregiver. Center for Birth, Seattle. happybabiesparenteducation.com **ONGOING EVENT**
Molbak's Butterfly Garden. Walk among flowers and amazing free-flying butterflies. Daily, 9:30 a.m.–6 p.m., through Oct. 2. Included with admission. Woodland Park Zoo, Seattle. zoo.org

18

Bug Blast. Buzz on over to touch a tarantula, see a live bug show, have a buggy snack and more. 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Included with admission. The Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, Seattle. burkemuseum.org
Seattle Mini Maker Faire. Crafters, tinkers, inventors and professional makers of all ages gather to show their stuff and talk with visitors. Saturday–Sunday, Sept. 17–18. \$9–\$18 and up; ages 4 and under free. EMP Museum, Seattle. makerfaireseattle.com

19

Shoreline Indoor Playground. Large gym play time re-opens for fall, just in time for cooler weather. Monday–Friday, 9:30–11:30 a.m. \$3. Ages 1–5 with caregiver. Spartan Recreation Center, Shoreline. shorelinewa.gov **ONGOING EVENT**
Science of Soccer Workshop. Learn how soccer and science intersect at this STEM for Fun workshop presented by a Tesla High School student. 6–7 p.m. **FREE;** preregister. Ages 8–14. King County Library System, Kirkland Branch. kcls.org

20

Self-guided Hatchery Tour. Grab the brochure and check out the hatchery and spawning salmon in Issaquah Creek. Daily 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. **FREE;** donations accepted. Issaquah Salmon Hatchery. issaquahfish.org
Academy of Play Kids' Club. Kids build their own miniature world. Simultaneous adult workshop available. 6:30–8 p.m. \$10; preregister. Ages 7 and up. MOHAI, Seattle. mohai.org

25

Apple Festival. Celebrate our state's finest fruit with farm activities and fresh apples and pears to take home. Saturday–Sunday, Sept. 24–Oct. 30. **FREE** entry; items for purchase. Lattin's Country Cider Mill & Farm, Olympia. lattinscider.com
Adventure Playground. Last day to build in the woods with tools and materials; closed-toe shoes required. 1–4 p.m. Admission by donation. Ages 4 and up; under age 12 with caregiver. Deane's Children's Park, Mercer Island. mercergov.org

26

Play to Learn. Kids and caregivers gather for community play and circle time. Mondays, 10–11:30 a.m.; additional weekly times and locations. **FREE.** Ages 6 and under with caregiver. Madison Complex, Tacoma. playtacoma.org **ONGOING EVENT**
Maker Mondays. Experiment with 3D modeling and try out the 3D printer. Mondays, 3–8 p.m. \$5; printing material extra; preregister. Ages 11–18, under 15 with adult. Future of Flight Aviation Center, Mukilteo. futureofflight.org **ONGOING EVENT**

27

Tuesday Play Day. Drop-in play time just for families of children with special needs. Tuesdays, 10–11:30 a.m. Pay-as-you-will admission. Ages 1–6 with families. Children's Museum of Tacoma. playtacoma.org **ONGOING EVENT**
Parent Workshop: Managing Temper Tantrums. Learn tools to pre-empt or minimize meltdowns; child care available in the museum. 6–7:30 p.m. **FREE;** \$5 donation for child care; preregister. KidsQuest Children's Museum, Bellevue. kidsquestmuseum.org

WEDNESDAY



Bug Blast at the Burke Museum, Seattle, Sept. 18

7

Firefighter Meet and Greet. KidsQuest welcomes a Bellevue firefighter to share fire safety tips, show equipment and more. 11 a.m. Included with admission. Ages 1–10 with families. KidsQuest Children's Museum, Bellevue. kidsquestmuseum.org
Green Lake Bat Walk. Learn about the important role played by our flying, furry friends. 6:30 p.m. **FREE.** Recommended for ages 10 and up. Bathhouse Theater at Green Lake, Seattle. batsnorthwest.org

14

Student Wednesday at BAM. Students welcomed to view museum collections for free every second Wednesday of the month. 11 a.m.–6 p.m. **FREE** for grades K–12 with online coupon. Bellevue Arts Museum. bellevuearts.org
Sammamish Farmers Market. Stop by for live symphony music (5:30–6:30 p.m.), a kids' activity — clothespin caterpillars today — and the late summer produce. Wednesdays, 4–8 p.m. through Sept. 21. Sammamish City Hall. sammamishfarmersmarket.org

21

The Mask You Live In. Documentary film and panel discussion explore society's narrow definition of masculinity and its effect on boys and young men. 7 p.m. \$15. Adults and teens. Stroum Jewish Community Center, Mercer Island. parentmap.com/maskyoulivein
Toddler Tales & Trails. Kids and caregivers enjoy story time and a tot-sized nature hike. Wednesdays, Saturdays, 10–11 a.m. \$2. Ages 2–5 with caregiver. Seward Park Audubon Center, Seattle. sewardpark.audubon.org
ONGOING EVENT

28

Lil' Diggers Playtime. Favorite giant sandbox re-opens for the season, with digging in the sand for kids and wi-fi for grown-ups. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, 9:30–11 a.m. or 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m. \$7. Ages 5 and under. Sandbox Sports, Seattle. sandboxsports.net
Wild Wednesday. Free admission the last Wednesday of the month with two-item food bank donation. 9 a.m.–8 p.m. **FREE** with donation. Ages 1–10 with caregiver. PlayDate SEA, Seattle. playdatesea.com

THURSDAY

1

The Evergreen State Fair. Carnival, livestock exhibits and more fair fun. Daily through Sept. 5. \$7–\$12; ages 4 and under free; rides extra. Monroe. evergreenfair.org
First Thursday at Lake Union Park. Sail a pond boat (11 a.m.–2 p.m.) or build a toy boat (3–5 p.m.), climb aboard tugboat Arthur Foss and steamship Virginia V (noon–5 p.m.) and explore MOHAI (10 a.m.–8 p.m.). **FREE;** pond boats and boat-building by donation. Seattle. cwb.org

8

Story Time for Kids. Settle in for new and classic kids' books, plus activities and refreshments. Thursdays, 11 a.m. **FREE.** Ages 3–7 with caregiver. University Bookstore, Bellevue. bookstore.washington.edu
ONGOING EVENT
Si View Summer Concert and Market. Partake in the late summer farmers market bounty and listen to jazzy folk tunes by the The Ginger Ups. Market 4–8 p.m.; music 5:30–7 p.m. Si View Park, North Bend. siviewpark.org

15

Kaleidoscope Play and Learn. Meet and play with other families. Thursdays, 10:30–noon. **FREE.** Ages 0–5 with caregiver. Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park. thirdplacecommons.org
ONGOING EVENT
Critter Club. PDZA kids' program features stories, hands-on exploration and an animal surprise. Sept. 15, 16, 29 and 30, 11 a.m. \$11–\$13; preregister. Ages 3–4 with caregiver. Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, Tacoma. pdza.org

22

Tugboat Story Time. Get your sea legs on and board a tugboat for stories and fun. Second and fourth Thursdays of the month, 11 a.m.–noon. **FREE.** Ages 2–5 with caregiver. Center for Wooden Boats, Seattle. cwb.org
ONGOING EVENT
September Tree Tour. Download the map for a self-guided, in-town nature hike in search of Japanese maples and other specimens. **FREE.** Washington Park Arboretum, Seattle. depts.washington.edu/uwbq

29

Family Nature Class. Explore the natural world with learning stations and a trail walk. Wednesday–Saturday, 9:30–11:30 a.m. \$18 per adult/child pair; preregister. Ages 2–5 with caregiver. Washington Park Arboretum, Seattle. depts.washington.edu/uwbq
ONGOING EVENT
Mommy & Me Movie. Crying, breastfeeding, burping; it's all fine. Thursdays, 10 a.m. \$8.50. Adults with infants. Lincoln Square Cinemas, Bellevue. cinemark.com
ONGOING EVENT

FRIDAY

2

Washington State Fair. Close out your Northwest summer with carnival rides, fair treats and animal exhibits. Daily except Tuesday, Sept. 2–25. \$7.50–\$12.50; ages 5 and under free; kids free Labor Day weekend; shows and rides extra. Washington State Fair Events Center, Puyallup. thefair.com
Despicable Me 2. Bring your pillow and your pals and cozy up on the grass for an outdoor movie; open mic beforehand. 7 p.m.; film shown at dusk. **FREE.** Jefferson Park, Seattle. beacon-arts.org

9

Kruckeberg Garden Tots. Last few chances for fun and exploration in this unique hidden garden. Fridays, 10 a.m.–1 p.m., through Sept. 16. \$7/family. Ages 2–6 with caregiver. Kruckeberg Botanic Garden, Shoreline. kruckeberg.org
ONGOING EVENT
Blue Friday at the Library. Get ready for the start of the regular NFL season by making your own Seahawks button. 2–3:30 p.m. **FREE.** King County Library System, Des Moines branch. kcls.org

16

The Great Wallingford Wurst Festival. Enjoy games, crafts, tasty brats, live music and beer at this popular end-of-summer festival. Friday–Saturday, Sept. 16–17. **FREE;** food for purchase. St. Benedict School, Seattle. stbens.net
Free Admission Night. Get busy playing with your friends and family the third Friday evening of the month. 5:30–9 p.m. **FREE.** Ages 1–12 with families. Imagine Children's Museum, Everett. imaginecm.org

23

Baby Jam. The tots will be a-rockin' with this multi-lingual, drop-in musical exploration. Fridays, 10:30 or 11:15 a.m. \$12. Ages 0–5 with caregiver. Balance Studio, Seattle. babyjam.net
ONGOING EVENT
Ducks: Our Web-footed Friends. Learn how our Northwest ducks prepare for winter and make a ducky craft. 10–11 a.m. Preregister; \$2 suggested donation at the door. Lake Hills Greenbelt Ranger Station, Bellevue. bellevuewa.gov

30

Shadow Lake Bog Self-guided Walking Tour. Stroll the boardwalk in this fascinating bog preserve for a short, tot-length hike. Daily during daylight hours. **FREE.** Shadow Lake Nature Preserve, Renton. shadowhabitat.org
Science Sleuths Workshop. Kids dig into science and math. Today's topic: sum world games. 2:30–4:30 p.m. \$20; preregister. Ages 6–12. Imagine Children's Museum, Everett. imaginecm.org

SATURDAY

3

Ellensburg Rodeo and Kittitas County Fair. Saddle up and head over the mountains for exciting rodeo action and frontier fair fun. Rodeo Sept. 2–5; fair Sept. 1–5. Rodeo \$16/day and up; fair \$6–\$10/day; ages 5 and under free. Ellensburg. ellensburgrodeo.com; kittitascountyfair.com
Olympia Harbor Days. Tugboats are the stars at this maritime fest with tours and tugboat races, plus historic ships, kids' activities and more. Friday–Sunday, Sept. 2–4. **FREE.** Percival Landing, Olympia. harbordays.com

10

All About Steam. This dockside fest celebrates the steam-powered maritime fleets of yore with scien-terrific activities for kids. 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Included with admission. Foss Waterway Seaport, Tacoma. fosswaterwayseaport.org
Night Market and Autumn Moon Festival. Stroll the vibrant streets, partake in international food offerings and enjoy music and breakdance performances. 4 p.m.–12 a.m. **FREE;** food for purchase. Chinatown/International District, Seattle. cidbia.org

17

Family Forest Walk: Birds of Promontory Point. Head out to explore one of the "birdiest" places in the park to find raptors, woodpeckers and more. 10–11:30 a.m. \$3; preregister. All ages. Magnuson Park, Seattle. magnusonnatureprograms.com
Pioneer Days Festival. Get a taste of early settler life with crafts, storytelling, old-time games, panning for gold and more. Noon–4 p.m. **FREE.** Job Carr Cabin Museum, Tacoma. jobcarrmuseum.org

24

Fishermen's Fall Festival. Trout pond fishing, taiko drumming, fun spectator opportunities such as survival suit races and more. 11 a.m.–6 p.m. **FREE.** Fishermen's Terminal, Seattle. fishermensfallfestival.org
Sensational Sea Otters. Learn all about these important, playful and super-cute marine mammals. Saturday–Sunday, Sept. 24–25. Included with admission. Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, Tacoma. pdza.org

SHANE/PIRABY

Sensational Sea Otters at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, Tacoma, Sept. 24–25





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Fabulous fall family arts

continued from page 23



VocalPoint! performs Oct. 8–30

La Causa

Klondike National Historical Park, MOHAI
Sept. 4 and 17

Community theater group Living Voices — which explores history through live theatrical performances paired with archival film — tells the 1960s-era story of Marta Hernandez and the farmworkers' movement to battle for civil rights and end inhumane working conditions. **Free** (Klondike, Sept. 4) and **free with museum admission** (MOHAI, Sept. 17). **Ages 10 and older.** livingvoices.org

Oliver!

Highline Performing Arts Center, Burien
Sept. 10–25

Take a wild adventure through Victorian England at this full-length Broadway production by the Hi-Liners, as Dickens' famous orphan navigates London's underworld,

searching for home and family. Youth ages 9–22 play all the roles, and are accompanied by a live orchestra as they sing Lionel Bart's timeless classics such as "Food, Glorious Food." **\$12–\$25.**

All ages. hi-liners.org

The Addams Family

Tacoma Musical Playhouse
Sept. 23–Oct. 16

Inspired by the original cartoon, this musical centers around Wednesday Addams, who has grown up and met a nice young man. When the

boyfriend and his conventional parents show up for dinner to meet the family, the kooky Addams relatives are unable to behave normally, and chaos ensues. **\$22–\$31. Ages 5 and older.** tmp.org

Elephant & Piggie's 'We Are in a Play!'

Olympia Family Theater
Sept. 30–Oct. 23

In this musical — accompanied by a live ensemble and shown at OFT's lovely new theater — Mo Willems' popular pals sing, dance and laugh as they find themselves the stars of their very own show. **\$13–\$19. All ages.** olyft.org

A Raisin in the Sun

Seattle Repertory Theatre
Sept. 30–Oct. 30

This 1959 masterpiece by Lorraine Hansberry chronicles an African-American family in Chicago whose dreams are derailed by racism. According to *The New York Times*, the play "changed American theater forever," becoming an award-winning success at a time when there was perceived to be no African-American audience for Broadway theater. Some shows include a post-performance Q&A with the cast. **\$17 and up. Ages 13 and older.** seattlerep.org



A Raisin in the Sun at Seattle Rep



La Causa

October

Cirque Goes to the Cinema

Benaroya Hall, Seattle
Oct. 7–9

Cirque de la Symphonie returns with an all-new 90-minute program of death-defying feats by acrobats, aerialists and jugglers, each choreographed to movie music (*Chariots of Fire*, *The Magnificent Seven*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*) that is performed live by the Seattle Symphony. **\$34 and up. Ages 4 and older.** seattlesymphony.org

Tales of Peter Rabbit

Thistle Theatre, Seattle and Bellevue
Oct. 8–30

Bring young kids to an ingenious bunraku production of the Beatrix Potter classic: Puppeteers dressed in black operate the puppets from behind. Stick around to meet puppets and their performers after the show. **\$10. All ages.** thistletheatre.org

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

Seattle Children's Theatre
Oct. 13–Dec. 11

Narnia comes to life in a dazzling musical version of the C.S. Lewis classic about four British children who stumble upon a magical world of talking animals where a certain white witch needs to be kicked out of the kingdom. Directed by Linda Hartzell, founding (and just retired) artistic director

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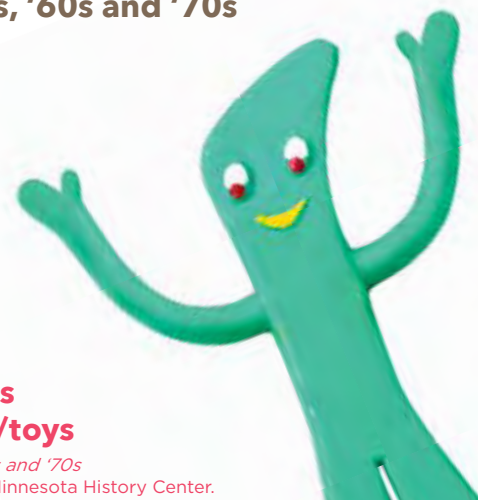
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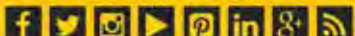
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Connect With LLS



Fabulous fall family arts

continued from page 27

at Seattle Children's Theatre (SCT), the production reprises an SCT favorite from 2003. **\$25 and up. Ages 6 and older.** sct.org

Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka!

Studio East, Kirkland

Oct. 14–30

When chocolate magnate Willy Wonka is searching for a successor, Charlie Bucket and a memorable group of other kid candidates tour the chocolate factory and get a close-up view of its fantastical inner workings. **\$17–\$19. Ages 5 and older.** studio-east.org

Hansel and Gretel

McCaw Hall, Seattle

Oct. 15–30; Family Day, Oct. 30

This adaptation of the classic Grimm story, written by 19th-century German composer Engelbert Humperdinck, spotlights themes ranging from poverty to bravery, and has been described as “provocative, dreamy and melodious.”

Family Day, on Sunday, Oct. 30, includes activities and a \$15 ticket price for kids 18 and younger. \$25 and up (\$15 for kids on Family Day). Ages 7 and older. seattleopera.org

Fahrenheit 451

Wade James Theatre, Edmonds

Oct. 20–30

The Driftwood Players present this thought-provoking story based on the Ray Bradbury novel as part of its “Theatre of Intriguing Possibilities” (TIPs) series. A book burner in a future world begins to question society and his role in it. **Check website for prices. Ages 12 and older.** edmondsdriftwoodplayers.org

Lemony Snicket

The Composer is Dead

Benaroya Hall, Seattle

Oct. 22, 11 a.m.

Seattle Symphony's first Classical KING FM Family Concert of the season is a wacky murder mystery: The composer is dead and instruments are under suspicion. The full symphony performs; Halloween costumes encouraged. **\$15–\$20. Ages 12 and younger.** seattlesymphony.org

The Snow Queen

SecondStory Repertory, Redmond

Oct. 22–Nov. 13

Frozen fans will enjoy this production of the original Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale on which the movie was loosely based. The plot centers on two friends, Gerda and Kay, who have to find their way home while battling the nefarious Snow Queen. **\$10; \$5 for ages 1–3 for all-ages shows on Sundays. Ages 5 and older; Sunday shows are all ages.** secondstoryrep.org

VocalPoint! Seattle Fall Show

Broadway Performance Hall, Seattle

Oct. 27–30

Budding singers will be enthralled by this talented, highly professional ensemble of high school vocalists who sing contemporary music; parents will love the theme of the fall show — classic rock. **Check website for prices. Ages 4 and older.** nwchoirs.org

November

The Wizard of Oz

Lakewood Playhouse

Nov. 4–13

Lakewood Playhouse's annual Spotlight production features a show for all ages, performed by actors of all ages. This year's production chronicles the well-loved story of Dorothy, her quest to return home and the familiar, lovable characters who help her along the way. **\$24–\$29. All ages.** lakewoodplayhouse.org

Treasure Island

Parish Hall Theatre, Mercer Island

Nov. 4–20

Talented kids play all the roles in this Youth Theatre Northwest production about young Jim Hawkins' seafaring adventure. The production has non-gender-specific casting, which means female actors may play male roles and vice versa. **\$13–\$17. Ages 6 and older.** youththeatre.org

Singin' in the Rain

Village Theatre

Nov. 10–Dec. 31, Issaquah

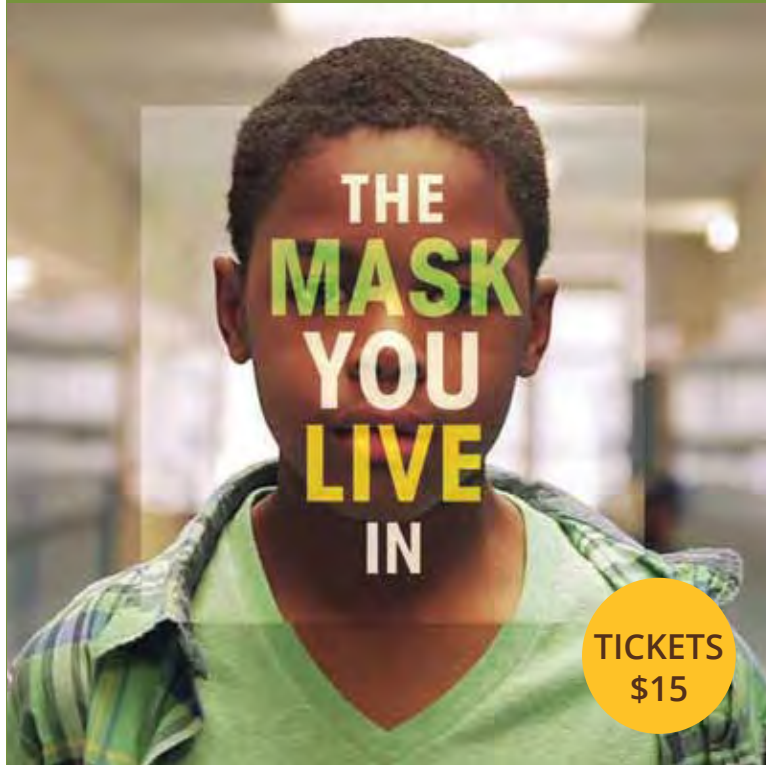
Jan. 6–29, Everett

Romance, stardom and aspirations intertwine as “talkies” begin to replace silent films in the 1920s. Highlights of this high-energy production by one of the region's premier musical theater companies will include well-loved song and dance numbers and real “rain” on the stage. **\$35–\$78. Ages 10 and older.** [>>](http://villagetheatre.org)



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Fabulous fall family arts

continued from page 29

'Bye Bye Birdie'

Bellevue Youth Theatre – Crossroads
Nov. 11–20

As a rock 'n' roll heartthrob prepares to go off to war, his agent plans a publicity stunt in a small town involving a good-bye kiss, which results in romance and mayhem before resolution is reached. The show features beloved songs such as "Put on a Happy Face." **\$8–\$15. Ages 6 and older.** bellevuewa.gov



Kevin Spencer
dazzles in
Edmonds, Nov. 19

Global Party

The Moore Theatre, Seattle
Friday, Nov. 18, 7:30 p.m.

A dynamic showcase of cultural and contemporary dance and music stars young, highly talented musicians and dancers from the Northwest. On the menu: wide-ranging selections from Mexican to Filipino, and hip-hop to African. **All ages. \$10.** stgpresents.org

The Magic of Kevin Spencer

Black Box Theatre, Edmonds
Community College
Saturday, Nov. 19, 11 a.m.

Renowned illusionist Spencer is also an educator and expert in the field of integrating magic into rehabilitative therapy. This new show is designed to be especially welcoming to children and families with autism, sensory sensitivity or other disabilities. ASL interpretation provided. **\$10. All ages.** edmondscenterforthearts.org

Raffi

The Moore Theatre
Sunday, Nov. 20, 1 p.m.

The best-selling musician who put kids' music on the map is touring in honor of his 40th anniversary. Expect tunes from his new CD *Owl Singalong*, including a tribute to the late folk-music icon Pete Seeger. **\$30. All ages.** stgpresents.org

Disney's 'The Little Mermaid'

The 5th Avenue Theatre, Seattle
Nov. 23–Dec. 31

A feisty mermaid who trades fins for legs in pursuit of love; an evil sea witch who tries to foil her plans; a mesmerizing score by Alan Menken ("Kiss the Girl," "Under the Sea"): It's all part of the 5th Avenue Theatre's production of one of Disney's best-loved musicals. **\$36 and up. Ages 4 and older.** 5thavenue.org ■

Ulin ballet tickets!

We are giving away five pairs of tickets to see Pacific Northwest Ballet's *Tricolore* (value \$150)!

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Globe-trotting arts

Explore the world this fall, no plane tickets required

BY GEMMA ALEXANDER

For most families, travel season ends when the kids go back to school in September. But you don't have to stop exploring the world: These shows and concerts can keep summer's atmosphere of exploration and discovery alive all fall.



Portuguese fado singer Mariza is at Meany Hall on Nov. 1

Meany Center World Series

The University of Washington's World Series at Meany Hall is a carefully curated selection of music and dance performances from around the world, representing a diverse mix of styles and genres. You can subscribe to one of the four series (World Dance, International Chamber Music, President's Piano and World Music and Theatre) or create your own (choose four or more shows at 10 percent off regular price). Highlights this fall include **Mark Morris Dance Group** with **The Silk Road Ensemble** performing an ancient Persian tale (Oct. 6–8) and **Portuguese fado singer Mariza** (Nov. 1). A bonus: For the piano and the chamber series, get two free youth tickets for every adult ticket. meanycenter.org/events-tickets/subscriptions

Festál in fall

Seattle Center's yearlong series of free cultural festivals, Festál, honors the richness and diversity of the Pacific Northwest with performances, workshops, food and more. This fall's festivals celebrate **Croatia** (Oct. 2), **Turkey** (Oct. 15–16), **Mexico** (the long-running **Fiestas Patrias** is on Sept. 17–18) and **Diwali** (Nov. 6), among others. seattlecenter.com/festal

Meydenbauer Center

Bellevue's Meydenbauer Center hosts homegrown multicultural arts events such as its **Japan Fair 2016** (Sept. 3–4), the American Asian Performing Arts Theatre's presentation of **Autumn Rhymes** (Sept. 30–Oct. 1) and a performance by the **Seattle Chinese Chorus** (Oct. 23). Other cultural arts ops include **Hawaii's Legends** (Oct. 30) and the **Russian American Entertainment Group's** performance (Nov. 15). meydenbauer.com/attend/event

Tango Argentino performs at Crossroads on Dec. 17



The lineup for the free Seattle Children's Festival on Oct. 9 includes the Melody Institute

Cultural Crossroads

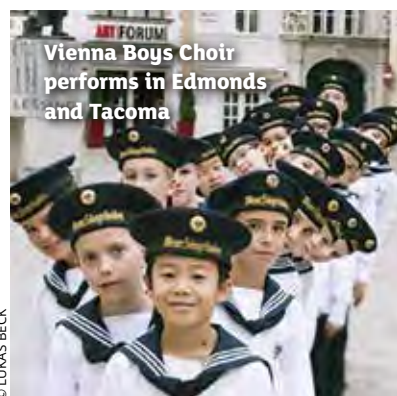
Head to Crossroads Bellevue on the third Saturday of the month for **Northwest Folklife at Crossroads**, which presents free family-friendly cultural arts performances. The fall lineup includes Mexican folkloric dance troupe **Bailadores de Bronce** (Sept. 17), **Vela Luka Croatian Dance Ensemble** (Oct. 15), **Kabuki Academy** (Nov. 19) and **Tango Argentino and Friends** (Dec. 17). nwfolklife.org/programs/crossroads-cultural-arts-series

Seattle Children's Festival

If you're not on the Eastside, Folklife still has you covered. The **Seattle Children's Festival at Seattle Center** on Oct. 9 is a full day of music and dance performances, workshops and hands-on activities designed to introduce kids to new cultures and traditions. nwfolklife.org/seattlechildrensfestival

The sound of Asian music

Travel to Asia via Benaroya Hall several times this fall. The **Guangdong National Orchestra of China** celebrates the Chinese Moon Festival with performances called **Autumn Memory** (Sept. 12) and **Silk Road Melody** (Sept. 13), a musical epic about the Chinese



Vienna Boys Choir performs in Edmonds and Tacoma

sailors who opened up trade and cultural exchange with foreign lands. On Sept. 25, the annual "East Meets West" concert, titled **Year of the Monkey: Chinese Music in the Great Northwest**, will combine Chinese orchestrations with popular western classics. seattlesymphony.org

The world on the big screen

Explore the world's stories in film this fall at the **Seattle Latino Film Festival** (Sept. 30–Oct. 9, slff.org), or the **Seattle South Asian Film Festival** (Oct. 14–23, tasveer.org/seattle-south-asian-film-festival).

European classics

Historically, Russia has produced some of classical ballet's greatest choreographers and dancers; see one of the country's finest companies, the **Russian Grand Ballet**, perform the classic Petipa ballet **Swan Lake** at Edmonds Center for the Arts on Oct. 26; and at Olympia's Washington Center for the Performing Arts on Oct. 27; and **The Sleeping Beauty** at Tacoma's gorgeous Pantages Theater on Oct. 28. Another grand European tradition is the **Vienna Boys Choir**, founded by Emperor Maximilian I in 1498. Its troupe of 10- to 14-year-old singers perform at Edmonds Center for the Arts on Nov. 12 and at Tacoma's Pantages Theater on Nov. 13. edmondscenterforthearts.org, broadwaycenter.org ■

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Go wild this birthday

This was the summer of jungle-themed movies. Between *The Jungle Book* and *Tarzan*, chances are good your kid will be clamboring for a truly wild birthday party sometime soon. A few ideas to get you started:



Animal print balloons — They exist and they're awesome! Get 50 for bargain prices (we're talking less than \$15) to add a splash of jungle fun without straying too far off the birthday path.



Snake sandwich — Never fear. This is a sandwich that looks like a snake, not a sandwich made of snake (whew). Kick your Subway game up a level with this easy-to-make recipe to feed the masses.



DIY safari binoculars — Extend the birthday fun by having your guests first make and then play with this must-have safari accessory. Wild animals not included.



Swinging vine photo booth — Truly a stroke of genius, this swinging photo booth will encourage all kinds of party-time fun without the hassle or expense of a real photo booth. Simply grab your phone, wrapping paper, streamers and tape and you're off to a swingin' good time.

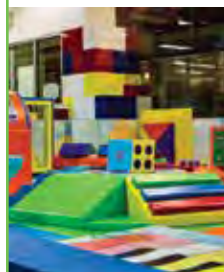
Details and additional party ideas at parentmap.com/jungle-book

—Tiffany Doerr Guerzon

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0-4

International adoption adapts

Adoption of kids with special needs grows popular amid changing global rules

By Nancy Schatz Alton

The first time Kristin Kalning and her husband adopted a child, the process took two years. Four years later, when they applied to adopt a second child from Ethiopia, they were told it would take at least twice as long. It was upsetting news for the growing family.

Then, Kalning went skiing. On the ski lift, she met a woman who'd just adopted her daughter from China. "When I asked, 'Where's your daughter?' she said, 'Oh, she's off snowboarding. She has limb differences, but she snowboards.'"

Inspired, Kalning and her family decided to adopt a child with special needs, an option they'd already been considering. Within 12 months of making the decision, they were on their way home from China with their second son, who was born with a cleft palate. He turned 3 the day the family landed in Seattle.

"We were so lucky to be matched with him," Kalning says. "We cannot imagine our lives without his joyful, smiling face."

The ever-changing world of adoption

In the past decade, the landscape of international adoption has changed drastically, with new adoptions decreasing in the United States by 75 percent between 2004 and 2015. That's nearly 23,000 children adopted by American families in 2004, compared to a little more than 5,600 children in 2015, according to the U.S. State Department.

Part of the decline is due to the U.S.'s 2008 adoption of the Hague Adoption Convention, an international treaty meant to prevent the abduction and trafficking of kids. American adoption agencies must now be Hague-accredited, a lengthy process full of protections for children and parents, both biological and adoptive.

"For prospective adoptive families, the biggest impact is that families can no longer adopt internationally without the assistance of a U.S. accredited agency," says Greg Eubanks, the CEO of the World Association for Children and Parents (WACAP). Before, families could work directly with an orphanage overseas.

Countries have also been changing their rules,



including three nations that were once among the most popular for American adoptive families: Guatemala, Russia and China.

U.S. adoptions from Guatemala have all but stopped since 2007 due to concerns of corruption, while in 2013, Russia imposed a ban on all adoptions to the U.S. for political reasons. Meanwhile, in China, where adoption by Americans is still legal following the Hague Convention, U.S. adoptions have dropped by more than half compared to 2004. The reasons are many, says Eubanks.

For one, China has relaxed its one-child policy, while at the same time, domestic Chinese adoption has grown more popular. Now, he explains, WACAP more often sees children abandoned because of medical or developmental challenges. "American families are stepping forward to end [these children's] wait of families and provide [the children with] much-needed medical or therapeutic care," Eubanks says.

Finding a new home

The term "special needs" means many things to many different people. In the world of adoption, it most often refers to a child who is older than age 6 and/or who may have a medical diagnosis, developmental delay or significant history of complex trauma, Eubanks says.

"Children who have special needs have always been a subgroup of children adopted internationally," he adds. "They are now the majority."

Of course, deciding to adopt a child with special needs can lead to complicated conversations during an already complicated time.

"Once we decided we could accept a child with medical needs, checking off what you'd accept on a laundry list of deformities and medical issues weighed heavily on us," says Seattle father Tom Seery.

As the CEO of RealSelf, an online community for learning about cosmetic surgery, Seery was comfortable with surgically repairable conditions. His older son was born with a cleft lip and cleft palate, while his younger son has microtia (one ear is underdeveloped).

Beyond special needs, there's figuring out how to make an adopted child feel both part of a new culture and connected to the history of a country thousands of miles away.

"While you can't remove someone from their country and expect them to remain fluent in that culture, many people who adopt are doing as much as they can to help retain that," says Kim Park Nelson, author of *Invisible Asians: Korean American Adoptees, Asian American Experiences, and Racial Exceptionalism*. Interacting with local communities from the child's birth nationality or even visiting the child's birth country can make a world of difference, Park Nelson says.

Initially, Seery admits, he and his wife were so consumed with their children's medical needs that he wasn't thinking about cultural cohesiveness. That's since changed. "The judge who declared our adoption official said, 'Congratulations! You're now an Asian-American family,'" says Seery, who is Caucasian. "I'm trying to look at it through that lens."

Make no mistake, adopting internationally isn't for wimps, as Seery's wife likes to say. "Adoption means working to become a great parent. You'll need emotional maturity so you can admit when you are really struggling," Seery says. "Internationally adopted children are different; they've gone through traumas and abandonment. You can't assume giving them birthday cake and encouragement is enough. You'll have to do more and do things differently." >>>

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Write on

Good handwriting: Who needs it? Despite our screen-centric world, good (or, at least, legible) handwriting is still a must. Convincing your kid of that, however, can be far from easy. A pediatric occupational therapist offers these thoughts on how to best help your child move up from chicken scratch.

1. Put those feet on the floor. Ever tried writing while sitting on a bar stool? It's not as easy as it looks. Set your child up for success by finding her a good place to get her footing.

2. Practice makes perfect.

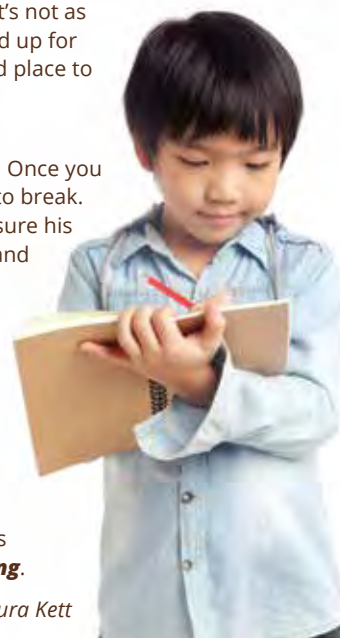
Handwriting is like any habit: Once you develop a bad one, it's hard to break. Work with your kid to make sure his letters are properly formed and encourage self-evaluation.

3. What's your number?

It's not all about the ABCs. Numbers matter too! Have your child write out her numbers and then check which need work, providing constructive feedback.

Find four more handwriting tips at parentmap.com/handwriting.

—Laura Kett



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0-4 International adoption

continued from page 37

Mill Creek mom Amy Wolf seconds that. One of her adopted children, who uses a wheelchair part-time, was almost 10 when she arrived from China.

"It's been really hard and sad and fun to hear her stories because she had a whole life before us," Wolf says. "All adopted children have to grieve the loss of whatever they had, even if what they had was eating out of garbage cans and being smacked around. Still, she's the most joyful person I've ever met."

Wolf says parenting her two adopted children is similar to parenting her two biological children.

"All parents are always figuring out, 'How do we do this? How do we journey together?'" she says. "The truth is, I'm always trying to get my husband to say yes to one more [adoption]. I would do it again in a heartbeat — even the hard stuff."

Stars in the sky

For those interested in international adoption, Eubanks recommends contacting an agency. "We're going to find an intersection between your passions and skill set and a child's needs," he says.

An agency supports families before,

during and after adoption, answering questions ranging from how much it costs (an average of between \$30,000 and \$35,000, with some options costing as much as \$60,000) to what life looks like for an adoptive family 5, 10, 20 years into the future.

Local organizations such as Adoptive Friends and Families of Greater Seattle and the University of Washington's Center for Adoption Medicine offer support for both parents and children.

So, what keeps families going? Why chose international adoption despite the red tape, the paperwork, the geopolitical power plays? Simple: family.

"Every child deserves a family that's going to be completely, irrationally nuts about them, whether they have a heart defect, have experienced complex trauma or live 10 time zones away," Eubanks says. "Families that adopt are responding to needs that they see as humans and their motivations are as many and as individual as the stars in the sky." ■

Nancy Schatz Alton is the co-author of The Healthy Back Book and The Healthy Knees Book and is currently working on a memoir about her daughter's learning journey.

considering adoption?

Check out these resources:

World Association for Children and Parents (wacap.org)

Agape Adoptions
(agapeadoptions.org)

Creating a Family, The National Infertility & Adoption Education Nonprofit
(creatingafamily.org)

Adoptive Families
(adoptivefamilies.com)

U.S. Department of State Inter-country Adoption website (travel.state.gov/content/adoptionsabroad/en.html)

Adoptive Friends and Families of Greater Seattle (affgs.org)

Center for Adoption Medicine
(adoptmed.org)

Families with Children from China-Northwest
(fcc-nw.memberlodge.com)

Families for Russian and Ukrainian Adoption
(orgsites.com/wa/frua-inc)

Asian Adult Adoptees of Washington (aaawashington.org)

Families Like Ours
(familieslikeours.org)

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3–8

The new language detectives

How dual immersion models are breaking the mold for learning language

By Shawna De La Rosa

Thirty years ago, little Analisa Calderon sat on the carpet of a Minnesota kindergarten classroom and listened to her teacher give instructions in Spanish.

A little girl next to her whispered, “Do you know what she’s saying?”

“I remember being a little overwhelmed,” Calderon says. “I could understand a little of what [the teacher] was saying because my dad spoke Spanish to me. So I told her, ‘A little bit.’”

Calderon, now a Seattle physician, was attending an early version of a Spanish immersion class.

Today, this is called a two-way dual immersion program, meaning that some of the children are native Spanish speakers, some are bilingual and some come from English-only homes. Some programs teach in English for half the day and the other half in Spanish. Other programs are almost entirely Spanish in kindergarten and first grade. The goal is to have all children test at grade level in both languages by third grade.

While Spanish is the most common language taught in these programs, some schools focus on other languages such as French and Mandarin.

Calderon credits her early immersion experience with allowing her to quickly grasp Spanish. After studying the language in college, she not only speaks it fluently, but reads and writes in Spanish as well.

It comes in handy now that she’s a family physician at Sea Mar Community Health Centers in Seattle, where the majority of her patients speak Spanish.

“I have the ability to speak [my patients’] language, so they can be heard and understood. That’s a pretty big deal and it’s one of my favorite things about what I do.”

Bilingual skills such as these are in high demand, and schools and educators are finding ways to equip students with these capabilities.

Farin Houk, a cofounder and head of school at Seattle Amistad School, saw the gap between the demand for bilingual professionals and programs that teach students a second language, as well as the frustration of native Spanish speakers in English classrooms.



“There is widespread academic distress among native Spanish-speaking students,” she says. “I got to the level of frustration where I just couldn’t do it anymore.”

Houk, a former public school teacher, saw a system that tried to quash the native Spanish speaker’s first language, while also trying to develop a Caucasian native English-speaking middle- to upper-class group of bilingual students.

To her, this double-headed problem had a “no-brainer” solution.

Houk opted to start her own school to serve a mix of native Spanish-speaking, bilingual and native English-speaking students. The first cohort started in kindergarten and is now in third grade.

The Spanish/English mix varies per grade. Prekindergarten through first grade is taught entirely in Spanish. By second grade, students transition to math in English. In third grade, 30 percent of class is taught in English; the other 70 is in Spanish. For the next year, when the oldest group moves to fourth grade, instruction will be 50/50.

“The best way to learn a language is to live and learn alongside native speakers,” Houk says. “There are real, authentic opportunities for language learning.”

Early is excellent

Children can start the Amistad program as young as 3 years old, Houk says.

Parents sometimes wonder if their children won’t learn as much because they will be confused.

But that doesn’t seem to be the case. Research has shown that the earlier children are exposed to languages, the better their chances of retention and proficiency. Studies also show that studying a foreign language helps academic performance across subjects, narrows achievement gaps and enhances cognitive development.

Teachers understand that children can’t speak the language when they walk in, so they use plenty of visual cues to help students along, Houk says.

For example, a teacher will say, “*Quítate la chaqueta y cuélgala aquí!*” which means: “Take off your coat and hang it over here!”

While the teacher speaks the words, he or she also points to a coat, demonstrates removing it and points to “over here.”

“It’s just amazing what kids can do when we get out of their way,” Houk says.

Recently, one of Houk’s 3-year-old students, a native English speaker, had a situation with another student. When the little girl explained the problem to Houk, she did so in Spanish.

“The event happened in Spanish,” Houk says. “So I think it was just easier for her to talk about it in Spanish.”

Although that little girl did not speak Spanish when she started school in the fall, she is already capable of relating a situation in her second language.

In high demand

A number of Puget Sound-area public school districts and schools have implemented language immersion programs.

This spring, the Washington Association for Bilingual Education held its 2016 conference in Bellevue and highlighted some of the local dual immersion efforts.

Patrick Brown is the curriculum developer for additive bilingual programs for the Bellevue School District, where three elementary schools have two-way dual immersion Spanish classes and one school has a Mandarin program.

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The programs are so popular that many parents of incoming kindergartners at Lake Hills Elementary request that their kids be in a two-way dual immersion program, and there are waiting lists, Brown says.

The district tries to keep a 50/50 balance between native Spanish- and English-speaking students in the classes.

Teaching young children in their native language as well as a second language all connects to the district's mission of providing students with exemplary college preparatory education. And the two-way model benefits speakers of each language, Brown says. The English speakers have their Spanish-speaking peers to model the language and vice versa.

"Our district has done a lot of work with equity and equity of opportunity for our students to become college and career ready," Brown says. "We ask ourselves, 'What does that look like?'"

Kristin Percy Calaff, director of language learning at Highline Public Schools, sees a similar trend.

The district offers dual immersion in both Spanish and Vietnamese. Highline realized the importance of bilingualism and included it in its strategic plan, Calaff says.

"There are 84 languages spoken in the district," she says. "We build on them. We didn't want to lose this asset."

Finding educational tools in Spanish, such as books, and instructors qualified to teach in Spanish are two obstacles many schools face.

"The more programs grow, the more difficult it becomes to find well-qualified bilingual teachers," Calaff says. "We are expanding our recruitment efforts."

Calaff is also a parent to fifth- and seventh-grade students, both of whom are in dual immersion.

"When children learn a new language at a young age, they learn better, but not faster," she says. "It's a long-term commitment. You really need to be committed to staying the course at least until middle school."

Finding opportunities

Parents interested in dual immersion should consider whether or not it's a good fit for their child. For example, a parent won't be able to help their student with every piece of homework.

"Also, don't expect your child to speak the foreign language to you at home," Calaff says. "I remind parents that unless they have a purpose, they won't speak it. You just have to trust the teacher and listen to what the teacher has to say at the conferences."

Calaff feels that she's giving her children an early head start on becoming bilingual, but it will be up to them if they want to pursue it in the future.

"They will have the early roots if they want to go back to it later," she says.

Motivating children to truly immerse themselves in a language that isn't spoken in their own community can be challenging, says Tara Fortune, a director at the Center for Advanced

Research on Language Acquisition at the University of Minnesota.

"Getting kids to invest in that new language is the trick," Fortune says.

Those who enter the United States from other countries see the immediate value of speaking English.

"There is a perception that English is a valuable asset economically, politically and professionally, so there is a lot of status and motivation to learn the language," Fortune says.

"The experience of being introduced to two languages makes you a language detective," Fortune says. "So you start becoming more aware of language and the elements of language. It can be beneficial when it comes to ongoing language and literacy development."

Calderon hopes that the growing trend of dual immersion will encourage native language speakers to hold on to their original language, while learning English as well.

"There can be shame associated with speaking Spanish," she says. "I think these programs increase awareness, sensitivity and empathy. It makes us all more global citizens, and that continues to be important in our world." ■

Shawna De La Rosa is a mother of three boys. When she's not driving one — or all — of them to a practice, she writes about everything from education to the economy, the stock market to small business.

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6-12

The lunch bunch

Pack a brown bag your kid will be thrilled to unwrap

By Rebecca Mongrain

Goldfish and PB&J seemed even more boring than usual once stories went viral about what schoolchildren eat for lunch in other parts of the world. Seeing lunches that looked better than the majority of meals we eat on a daily basis had us reaching for inspirational cookbooks and searching Pinterest for ideas.

To feed that hunger for unique, fun foods that will keep students munching away, we rounded up the coolest international lunchbox ideas we could find. Don't worry about complex, multi-step recipes; although these meals are packed full of taste, they're easy to prepare. For more detailed recipe instructions, visit the listed blog.



VIETNAM

Vietnam is a country known for delicious entrées; a few are even easy enough to prepare that they can be tucked into a school lunch. This banh mi wrap from Fuss Free Cooking (fussfreecooking.com) takes all the delicious flavors of that iconic sandwich and wraps them up for lunchtime.

Place spicy grilled chicken in a wrap with a rainbow salad mix of pea shoots, red chiles (optional), onion, shredded cabbage, shredded broccoli, shredded carrots, lime slices and a handful of coriander. Roll it all up and slice into easy-to-hold portions. Your kids will munch it right up.



SWEDEN

Me and My Shadow (missielizzie-meandmyshadow.blogspot.co.uk) embraced the Euro lunch with a week of European-inspired lunches, showcasing dishes from Spain, Italy and other nations. One favorite: Sweden.

Parents will love this inspired lunchbox meal for its incredible ease. Everything included is easy to find at your local grocery store, and often premade: rye bread, cheese, cucumber and orange slices, a hard-boiled egg and smoked salmon. Also included: some homemade ginger biscuits (which you could easily swap out with store-bought gingersnaps). Swedish flag topper not included.



INDIA

This recipe for channa masala from Yummily Yours (yummilyyours.com) is so simple, you could even make it in the morning before school. All you need is 30 minutes — half of which is cooking time — and soon you'll have a lunchbox meal that's the envy of the whole class. Plus, it's mild enough to entice even the more spice-averse.

You'll need a can of chickpeas along with cinnamon, cumin, paprika and garam masala (all can be found at your local grocery). Mix the chickpeas and spices with sautéed onions, ginger-garlic paste, chopped onions and chopped tomatoes. Add some rice and naan or a spoonful of yogurt.



FRANCE

A French picnic lunch, like this one from Bento Zen (bentozen.wordpress.com), is sure to delight! Simply pack a turkey-and-ham pocket sandwich. Then, add some blueberries, Brie, cornichons (i.e., gherkins) and a few fresh veggies to achieve that French foodie flair. For a hungrier eater, toss in a French-style yogurt.



MEXICO

Lemons for Lulu (lemonsforlulu.com) takes a Mexican classic and makes it even better. This spin on the beloved taco is a perfect lunchbox item; it's even freezable!

Cut refrigerated pie dough into circles and add cooked ground beef, taco seasoning, black beans and cheddar cheese between two pieces of the dough. Then bake the mini taco for — it's a dish that will have your kids clamoring for more. For an even simpler recipe, ditch the pie crust and use tortillas instead. Add guacamole and/or salsa for extra kick.



JAPAN

The Japanese are masters of bento, which has inspired many a parent. Bloggers such as La Fuji Mama and Little Japan Mama have some fantastic posts on traditional Japanese bento lunches. For beginners, try this recipe from Bento Monsters (bentomonsters.com). Basically, these are sandwich rolls made with flattened sandwich bread and filled with tuna; place alongside some fresh fruit. Note how the sandwich rolls are dressed up with fun faces, accompanied by a few traditional bento touches.

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Rebecca Mongrain is a writer and photographer who writes about the wonders of parenting, food and home.

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16–19

Mine the gap

How to plan a gap year that helps, not hurts, your student

By Malia Jacobson

This spring, first daughter and graduating high school senior Malia Obama announced her intention to attend her father's alma mater, Harvard University. But not this fall. First, she'll take a yearlong break from the classroom (and the first family's spotlight) in an increasingly common post-high school rite of passage known as the gap year.

Malia Obama may be a highly visible trendsetter, but she's hardly alone. Harvard, her university of choice, is a national leader in the gap-year trend: Harvard actively encourages admitted students to defer enrollment for a year. More students are taking heed. The number of incoming Harvard students taking a gap year has jumped by 33 percent over the past decade; similarly, MIT's admission deferments doubled between 2009 and 2010. The trend isn't limited to the Ivy League, either: About one-third of graduating high school students take time off before college, usually to work, travel or volunteer, according to a National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) study conducted in 2012 (the last year for which this data is available).

There's a reason Harvard and other elite institutions increasingly encourage gap years: A break between high school and college seems to result in a better experience during and after college. According to the American Gap Association (AGA), students who take gap years have higher grade point averages and shorter average times to graduation than those who head directly to college. And the AGA reports that "gappers" are happier and more civic-minded after college: They're twice as likely to be satisfied with their jobs, twice as likely to vote and more than three times as likely to participate in volunteer work than students who don't take gap years.

But is a gap year really possible for any student who wants to undertake it? And how do students and families plan for the gap, and how do they define its success?

Money matters

It's clear that gap years have value — often, that value translates into dollars and cents. When parents look at the cost of funding a five- or six-year



college experience (the NCES reports that only 59 percent of college students finish in six years) and weigh the fact that the average time it takes to graduate for gap-year students is just four years after the start of college, the monetary value of a gap year becomes clear, says Charlie Taibi, COO of San Francisco-based UnCollege, a 5-year-old program that provides guidance and structure for gap years.

UnCollege's gap-year program has a price tag of \$16,000, which includes housing during stints abroad and in San Francisco, while a year at a private university runs an average \$32,404 for tuition and fees, according to CollegeData.

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and direction*

"A lot of this trend has to do with the increasing cost of college," says Taibi. "Parents are looking for return on investment [ROI] for college, and with gap years, the ROI is there."

But are gap-year benefits, financial and otherwise, available to all? "My sense is that this is a trend that mainly encompasses the higher-income brackets," says Doria Hastings, a counselor at Tacoma's Washington High School. "We're a school with a high poverty rate, and we don't see many students taking intentional gap years." Students may defer college enrollment after high school for a number of reasons, such as work or to help support their own family, she says, but her sense — and fear — is that many never return to school.

Data from the AGA lines up with her observations: The largest share — nearly 20 percent — of gap-year students have family incomes of more than \$200,000 per year. And as family income goes up, so does parental contribution to gap-year expenses, meaning that those in the lower-income brackets have to fund more of their gap-year experience themselves.

For this reason, Hastings encourages her students, many of whom are lower-income, to go directly to college, if possible.

"Many students don't know what they want to study and want to take time off to figure that out. But the entry-level classes in college are a great place to determine what you'd like to do," she says.

Maybe so, but heading straight to college simply isn't possible for every college-bound student, says Whitney Shute of Lacey. After she graduated in the top 10 of her class at Timberline High School in 2012, college wasn't financially feasible for her family. So she worked for two years to save up and contribute to her family's living expenses. She's now enrolled at Saint Martin's University studying psychology, with an expected graduation date of 2018.

While she didn't travel the world during her gap year, Shute is still satisfied with the decision, she says. "It wasn't easy seeing my classmates in high school an entire two years ahead of me in university," she says, "but I gained maturity, focus and direction." >>>



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16-19 Mine the gap

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Unschooling gap

The desire for a hiatus from traditional academia was a major motivator for taking a gap year, according to 81 percent of gappers cited in the 2015 American Gap Association study. Indeed, because so many gappers are hoping to break free from the rigor of tests and schedules, it's easy to imagine a gap year as an extended vacation of sorts, free from responsibilities.

This "spring break" image is a persistent myth, one that puts some parents off, says Taibi.

In reality, most gappers aren't free as birds. Nearly two-thirds participate in a structured gap-year program that involves travel, volunteerism and accountability. (Carpe Diem International Education, National Outdoor Leadership School and Global Citizen Year are the most popular programs, as reported in the AGA survey.) UnCollege's program, on track to "graduate" 100 students this year, includes coaching, service learning, international travel and an internship over a nine-month term. The AGA reports that only a little more than one-third of gappers take an "independent" gap year devoid of such structure.

Programming appears to pay off: Taking part in a structured gap-year program that includes international travel is one of the strongest predictors of a satisfying gap-year experience, according to the AGA. Other predictors of a great gap year include forming relationships with other gap-year peers and managing a personal budget.

And the common parental fear that gappers won't return to school? It just doesn't bear out. According to Joe O'Shea, author of *Gap Year: How Delaying College Changes People in Ways the World Needs*, students enter college after a gap year at the same

rate as students who go straight there after high school. In fact, some studies suggest more students attend college after a gap year than after high school: The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 69 percent of high school seniors enroll in college; per the AGA, as many as 90 percent of gappers head to college after their gap year.

Doing it right

The best gap year is one that's well-planned, says Paul Seegert, director of admissions at the University of Washington. Don't assume that a university allows or encourages gap years — some, like Gonzaga University, Seattle Pacific University and the University of Puget Sound, offer deferred enrollment, but others, such as the University of Washington and Washington State University, do not.

"We don't offer deferred enrollment, so students who wish to take a year off will need to reapply, and they're not guaranteed a spot in a year, even if they've already been admitted," Seegert says.

To smooth academic reentry after a gap year, Seegert and Hastings recommend ordering high school transcripts and test scores, and outlining all enrollment dates prior to departing on an international experience. If a college admission application for the year you'd like to attend is already available, fill it out prior to your departure, advises Seegert. Stay in touch with your intended university's admissions office about any financial aid or tuition deadlines, too.

This type of planning and up-front admin work help ensure that a gap year is an unforgettable experience. And now, it's POTUS-approved. ■

Malia Jacobson is a nationally published health and family journalist based in Tacoma.

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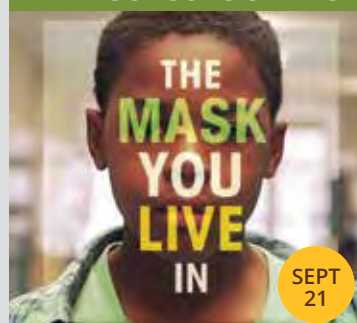
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