

Ithaca Parent & Teen

***The Magazine for
Parents & Teens***

Fall 2026 - Free

In This Issue:

- **Start the New School Year Without Losing Your Mind**
- **Tips for ADHD Kids to Get & Stay Organized**
- **Upcoming Events**
- **News and Interest**
- **More!**

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Ithaca Parent & Teen

The Magazine for Parents and Teens

Vol. XXIII, No. IV, Fall 2026

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News Clips

By Allison Childs Wells

Teenagers use food delivery apps in school

Almost one in four teenagers say they used delivery apps for meals during school hours, according to a new survey from public health researchers. And about 50% of teens use the apps after school. The majority of students are ordering unhealthy fast food—like pizza, burgers, and soda.

Lead author Mika Matsuzaki points out that federal nutrition guidelines prevent schools from serving unhealthy food in cafeterias and vending machines. But schools have no control over what students order on their smartphones. These apps, she says, are “fundamentally changing how our children access foods and beverages at school.”

Students in western states were more likely to report using delivery apps – about 34% in this region said they were allowed to use these services during school hours, which was “substantially higher” than other regions. Matsuzaki called the findings a “wake-up call” for parents and school administrators, who may not yet be aware of this new phenomenon.

Source:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/zacharyfolk/2026/07/27/nearly-1-in-4-us-teenagers-report-using-food-delivery-apps-during-school-hours-survey-says/>

Adult vs. teen obesity

Obesity doesn’t look the same at age 15 as it does at age 45, and Duke University School of Medicine researchers are learning why. A new study finds that teenagers retain a degree of metabolic flexibility that’s largely lost in adulthood, which suggests that the way teenage bodies respond to excess weight is fundamentally different and potentially more reversible. The discovery points to a potential window when the metabolic damage linked to obesity can be halted, or even reversed, before it becomes a lasting health burden.

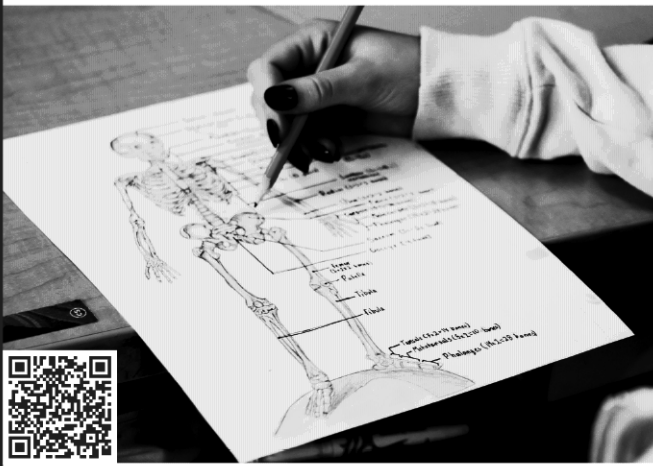
Medicine has tended to treat adolescents as little adults, according to Professor John Rawls at Duke, but “teenagers are still growing, building muscle and bone, and using energy in ways that are very different from adults.”

Nearly 1 in 5 U.S. children has obesity, a condition associated with higher risk for heart disease, diabetes, asthma, and some cancers later in life. Without intervention, most children with obesity will continue to have obesity into adulthood.

The researchers found differences in the gut microbiomes of obese and healthy-weight teens and adults, as well as the way that adolescents process nutrients. The warning signs are there in adolescence, but teens’ bodies still appear capable of adapting to the metabolic strain of excess weight. At this stage they may be more responsive to weight management through diet, medication, or microbiome-based therapies, suggesting that the earlier the inter-

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Five Easy Ways to Start the New School Year Without Losing Your Mind

By Rebecca Hastings

As I try to soak up the last moments of summer fun, I feel like I'll never be ready for the switch back to the routine of the school year. I'm not sure who invented the notion of the lazy days of summer, but it definitely wasn't a mom. This summer may have been filled with the park and the pool and the beach and popsicles and more TV time than I care to admit—but it didn't feel lazy. Now we're on the cusp of a new school year, and the pressure is building.

Suddenly it's like a switch is flipped, and we're supposed to slip right back into routine and structure again (which feels kind of like playing with that disastrous moon sand my kids love). The sun is shouting "stay and play," but the calendar is an annoying buzz in my ear challenging me to get it together.

But the transition to a new school year doesn't have to be complicated. You can have a great start with a few simple tricks. No, these tips will not complete the reams of paperwork headed your way during the first week of school, but they will help you feel better equipped to handle it.

Rest

Don't skim past this. I know rest can seem counterproductive and even impossible sometimes, but it will make a huge difference. My family knows that a tired mom is not the nicest mom, at least in my house.

Start thinking about what you can do now to feel more rested. Skip that last episode of your favorite show late at night. Give yourself permission to sit down for ten minutes in the afternoon. Do things that make your body and mind feel calmer. You'll be able to tackle the change to school days more effectively.

Eliminate

Think about the things you do. All of them. I know, it's a lot. Write them down. Now look at that list and cross off as many items as you can – not because you've done

them, but to eliminate them. At least for now. You can always add them back later if you want to.

Now that your list is smaller, consider what's left. Instead of vacu-

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New School Year

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uming three times per week, try twice. Skip the daily laundry and instead pick two days each week so you're not thinking about it every day. These changes don't need to be permanent (although they can be), but they will help during this busy time of transition.

Autopilot

Put as much as you can on autopilot. My favorite place to do this is with food—by creating a simple meal-rotation plan. For example, you might try: salad night, chicken and side vegetable, burgers and corn, taco night, breakfast for dinner, pizza, and leftovers. Rotate through the meals for the next few weeks. Your grocery list will stay the same,

and you won't have to think too hard or prep too much ahead of time. You can let this system go after the first few weeks of school in favor of your favorite fall recipes. But it will save your sanity now!

Other things you can put on autopilot: morning and bedtime routines, easy breakfast and snack options, five minutes a day for mail and paperwork.

Let Go

As much as I love finding fun ideas on Pinterest for magical first-day photos and perfectly-curated bento box lunches complete with animal-face mini sandwiches, it doesn't help me stay sane. In fact it adds pressure—making me feel as though I am responsible for making the new school year amazing.

We do not need to make back-to-school magical.

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News Clips

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vention, the better.

Source:

<https://medschool.duke.edu/news/scientists-are-discovering-something-surprising-about-obesity-teenagers>

Abortion Bans and Depression

A recent study suggests that the implementation of state-level total abortion bans is associated with an increase in suicidal thoughts among female high school students, pointing to a potential link between policy change and psychological well-being. Suicide is a leading cause of death among 10-24-year-olds in the U.S.

In recent years, public health experts have increasingly examined how broad societal conditions and legal policies shape emotional health. Policy decisions that restrict access to basic health-care services tend to increase personal uncertainty and reduce an individual's sense of control over their future life events.

"Right before the [2022] Dobbs decision, there was a lot of speculation about the effects of overturning *Roe v. Wade*, but almost no attention to suicide risk," said Wendy R. Sheldon of Verge Research. "Having worked in other countries where abortion was illegal, I knew that some women facing unwanted pregnancies would go to extraordinary lengths to end them, including risking their own lives. I also knew that young people are hit hardest by abortion restrictions and that an unwanted pregnancy at a young age can be especially devastating. So I wanted to explore whether there might be a connection between abortion restrictions and suicidality among young people."

The study showed that states with total abortion bans were associated with a 4.3 percentage point increase in suicidal ideation among female high school students—a statistically significant difference. Male students showed no change in either suicidal ideation or suicide attempts

following the legal shifts.

Source: <https://www.psypost.org/abortion-bans-associated-with-increased-suicidal-thoughts-in-female-teenagers/>

Teens Benefit from Breakfast

Teens who are habitual breakfast skippers benefit in significant ways by becoming regular breakfast eaters, according to a new study.

The researchers found that eating breakfast increased intake of important nutrients, and reduced the intake of high-fat and high-sugar

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Event Listings August

12 Wednesday

LGBTQ+ Youth Group

Tompkins County Public Library, 4:30pm. Join us to do crafts, play games, and socialize. Whether you're lesbian, gay, bi, trans, questioning, or just trying to figure things out—we're here for you! Registration is not required. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/lgbtq-youth-group-61522>.

Music on the Hill: Ageless Jazz Band

Dryden Veteran's Memorial Home, 6:00pm. Free. Info: <https://drydenrec.recdesk.com/Community/Page?pagelid=26643>.

13 Thursday

Ithaca Murals Walk with Caleb Thomas

Meet in TCPL's main hall at 10:00am. A guided walking tour of public art around downtown Ithaca, with a focus on literature-inspired projects. We'll explore how collaborative public art can inspire, connect, and build our community stronger. Rain or shine. Registration: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/tcpl-tours-ithaca-murals-walk-caleb-thomas-64878>.

Downtown Summer Concert Series

Bernie Milton Pavilion, Ithaca Commons, Thursdays, 5:00-8:00pm. Free and fun for the entire family. Featuring local, regional, and national acts in a wide variety of genres including jazz, blues, reggae, hip-hop, rock, and more. Info/lineup: <https://www.downtownithaca.com/summer-concert-series/>.

Plant Foraging Basics

Hosted by Cornell Cooperative Extension online at 6:00pm. We'll start with general foraging tips, and then go over some easily-identifiable species. For a hands-on follow-up, register for the Foraging Walk on August 23. Info/registration: <https://csetompkins.org/events/2026/08/13/plant-foraging>.

Books & Brew Book Club

Hopshire Farm & Brewery, 6:00pm. This month's theme is Vacation. Info: www.southworthlibrary.org.

14 Friday

Interpretive Gorge Walk

Buttermilk Falls State Park, 10:00am. Free. Hosted by PRI. The Finger Lakes region has an outstanding geological record exposed in the local gorges. This guided walk series will introduce major concepts about geology and geologic time, allowing participants to interpret the geological history of the region while enjoying the beauty of our local area. Info: www.priweb.org.

Stitch Club

Tompkins County Public Library, 1:00pm. Ages 16+. Stitch Club is an opportunity for knitters, crocheters, needle-pointers, and other stitchers to come together and work, and share our projects, skills, and advice. Stitchers of every experience level are welcome. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/copy-stitch-club-62303>.

Free Family Movie Night

Groton Public Library, Fridays at 5:30pm. Free popcorn, too! Info: www.grotonpubliclibrary.net.

The Importance of Being Earnest

Produced independently by Theatre Incognita and presented at Kitchen Theatre Company, August 14-16. Schedule/tickets: <https://www.kitchentheatre.org>.

Mary Poppins: The Broadway Musical

Smith Opera House, August 14-16. Featuring a talented cast of local young performers, unforgettable songs, dazzling dancing, and plenty of theatrical magic. This practically perfect production is an experience the whole family will enjoy. Schedule/tickets: <https://thesmith.org/events-list/mary-poppins-the-broadway-musical/>.

15 Saturday

Fossil ID Day

Museum of the Earth, every Saturday from 10:00am-5:00pm. Included with Museum admission. Did you find a rock in your backyard? Do you think it might be a fossil? Bring it to our Prep Lab, where Dr. Maureen Bickley will be happy to assist you. Info: www.priweb.org.

Illustrator Visit: Julian Plum

Tompkins County Public Library, 1:30pm. Join us to read *Whose Tree is This?* written by Marilyn Singer and illustrated by local artist Julian Plum. Curious about how the art gets made for picture books? Julian will talk about the illustration process (and his love of bugs and trees!). Attendees will have the chance to make their very own tree illustrations. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/illustrator-visit-julian-plum-64575>.

YMCA Family Field Day

Outdoor Education Center, 1349 Mecklenburg Rd., 2:00-4:00pm. An afternoon of family fun! Featuring yard games like disc golf, ladder ball, and cornhole, plus a guided nature walk. Registration:

Family Field Day.

16 Sunday

Science Connections: Little Bunny Foo Foo

Sciencenter, 2:00pm. Learn all about domestic rabbits from the Tompkins County 4-H Little Bunny Foo Foes club. They'll bring rabbits to pet, answer your questions, and put on a rabbit hopping demonstration. Info: <https://sciencenter.org/experiences/events/>.

17 Monday

Teen Maker Monday

Tompkins County Public Library, 4:00-6:00pm. Participants will have the opportunity to learn and use Makerspace machines. A variety of crafting supplies will be available. This program is first come-first served for machines, materials, and assistance. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/teen-maker-monday-54443>.

18 Tuesday

Healthy Tuesday Free Food Giveaway

Groton Public Library, Tuesdays at 12:30pm. We receive a large donation of food from Wegmans courtesy of the Friendship Donation Network. Info: www.grotonpubliclibrary.net.

LEGO Family Build Night

Tompkins County Public Library, 5:30pm. Buckets of LEGO will be provided for participants to borrow for their builds. Participants will also have the opportunity to display their creations in the Youth Services section for one week. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/lego-family-build-night-64437>.

Music in the Hollow: The Smoking Loons

Ellis Hollow Community Center, 6:00pm. Free. Scooter's BBQ food truck on site. Info: <https://www.ellishollowcc.org/music-in-the-hollow>.

19 Wednesday

Music on the Hill: Tailor Made

Dryden Veteran's Memorial Home, 6:00pm. Free. Info: <https://drydenrec.recdesk.com/Community/Page?pagelid=26643>.

20 Thursday

Ages 8-108 Board Game Club

Tompkins County Public Library, 4:00pm. Are you between the ages of 8 and 108 and love playing board games? Join us! No registration necessary; just drop in and join a game, and meet our staff and other board game enthusiasts. If you don't know how to play a game, don't worry—we will teach you! Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/ages-8-108-board-game-club-summer-session-64409>.

Ice Cream on the Porch & Middle School Open House

News Roots Charter School, 5:00-6:00pm. This event is open to incoming and current students and their caregivers, as well as the general public. Check out the Downtown Ithaca Summer Concert Series on the Commons afterwards – free and family friendly! Info: www.newrootsschool.org.

Downtown Summer Concert Series

Bernie Milton Pavilion, Ithaca Commons, Thursdays, 5:00-8:00pm. Free and fun for the entire family. Featuring local, regional, and national acts in a wide variety of genres including jazz, blues, reggae, hip-hop, rock, and more. Info/lineup: <https://www.downtownithaca.com/summer-concert-series/>.

21 Friday

Interpretive Gorge Walk

Watkins Glen State Park, 10:00am. Free. Hosted by PRI. The Finger Lakes region has an outstanding geological record exposed in the local gorges. This guided walk series will introduce major concepts about geology and geologic time, allowing participants to interpret the geological history of the region while enjoying the beauty of our local area. Info: www.priweb.org.

Try it! Workshop: Wheel Throwing

171 Cedar Arts, Corning, 6:00pm. Join us in the ceramics studio to give wheel throwing a try without having to commit to a full course. You'll learn some basic techniques and some fundamentals about ceramics. Registration: www.171CedarArts.org.

Nerf Night

YMCA, 6:00-8:00pm. Ages 8 and up will play games inspired by videogames, movies, and gym class classics in a night of energizing fun! Bring your own blasters and darts or borrow some from the Y. Blasters must fire at 100 feet per second or slower, and eye protection must be worn at all times during game play. Info: www.ithacaymca.com.

22 Saturday

Summer Reading Finale

Groton Public Library, noon-5:00pm. Featuring free hotdogs and popcorn; 3D-printed fossil bookmarks; kids coupons for a free book; adult/teen skull game with dice; and a scavenger hunt for kids! Plus: the physics bus from 11:30 to 3:30; face painting from 12:30 to 4:30; author Nate Collins from noon to 5:00; Science Tellers from 12:30 to 1:30; and Paul Krohn with his dino presentation and dino craft from 2:00-3:00. Info: www.grotonpubliclibrary.net.

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Events Calendar

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Cat Video Fest 2026

Smith Center for the Arts, Geneva, 3:00pm. Oscilloscope Laboratories presents CatVideoFest 2026, a compilation of the latest and best cat videos culled from countless hours of unique submissions and sourced animations, music videos, and classic internet powerhouses. A portion of ticket proceeds from every show goes directly to local cats in need. Tickets: <https://the-smith.org/events-list/catvideofest-2026/>.

23 Sunday

Teen Maker Monday

Tompkins County Public Library, 4:00-6:00pm. Participants will have the opportunity to learn and use Makerspace machines. A variety of crafting supplies will be available. This program is first come-first served for machines, materials, and assistance. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/teen-maker-monday-54443>.

24 Monday

Silent Book Club

Southworth Library, 6:30pm. Books are provided to take home, or you can bring your own book. This month's free book is *Speak to Me of Home* by Jeanine Cummins. Enjoy some snacks and quiet reading time at the Library. Info: www.southworthlibrary.org.

25 Tuesday

Healthy Tuesday Free Food Giveaway

Groton Public Library, Tuesdays at 12:30pm. We receive a large donation of food from Wegmans courtesy of the Friendship Donation Network. Info: www.grotonpubliclibrary.net.

Music in the Hollow: Joe Crookston

Ellis Hollow Community Center, 6:00pm. Free. Scooter's BBQ food truck on site. Info: <https://www.ellishollowcc.org/music-in-the-hollow>.

27 Thursday

Downtown Summer Concert Series

Bernie Milton Pavilion, Ithaca Commons, Thursdays, 5:00-8:00pm. Free and fun for the entire family. Featuring local, regional, and national acts in a wide variety of genres including jazz, blues, reggae, hip-hop, rock, and more. Info/lineup: <https://www.downtownithaca.com/summer-concert-series/>.

28 Friday

Interpretive Gorge Walk

Taughannock Falls State Park, 10:00am. Free. Hosted by PRI. The Finger Lakes region has an outstanding geological record exposed in the local gorges. This guided walk series will introduce major concepts about geology and geologic time, allowing participants to interpret the geological history of the region while enjoying the beauty of our local area. Info: www.priweb.org.

29 Saturday

Exhibit Reception: Guild of Natural Science Illustrators

Trumansburg Conservatory of Fine Arts, 4:00pm. Opening reception for the Finger Lakes Chapter of the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators' annual show at the Conservatory. This free event is open to the public. Info: <https://www.tburgarts.org/event-calendar>.

September

2 Wednesday

LGBTQ+ Youth Group

Tompkins County Public Library, 4:30-5:45pm. Join us to do crafts, play games, and socialize. Whether you're lesbian, gay, bi, trans, questioning, or just trying to figure things out—we're here for you! Registration is not required; feel free to join us! Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/lgbtq-youth>.

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News Clips

continued from page 7

foods throughout the day compared

with participants who didn't eat breakfast. Teens who consumed high-protein breakfasts saw even stronger benefits.

"This is one of the largest and longest tightly-controlled breakfast

trials in adolescents," said Emma Rose Brown, a doctoral student at University of Texas at Austin. "Our findings suggest that adding breakfast, particularly one rich in protein, may be an effective way to improve nutrient intake and diet quality among older adolescents."

The research indicated that although all three groups in the study consumed around the same number of calories throughout the day, those eating breakfast took in more crucial nutrients like fiber, iron, zinc and choline. Participants in the high-protein group consumed not only more protein, but more iron and choline than those in the normal-protein group. Both of the groups who ate breakfast consumed fewer desserts, sweets, and candy throughout the day compared with the participants who skipped breakfast.

Source: Medialxpress https://medicalxpress.com/news/2026-07-teens-daily-breakfast.html#google_vignette

Allison Childs Wells is a regular Ithaca Parent & Teen contributor.



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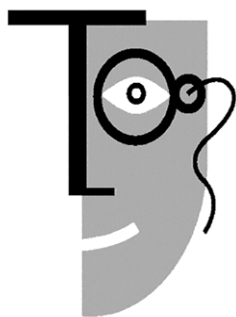
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News & Notes

By Ithaca Parent & Teen

Ithaca's 18th Annual Porchfest Returns September 20

Porchfest is a community-driven music festival held on the porches of the Fall Creek and Northside neighborhoods of Ithaca. It is free and open for anyone to attend or perform. Performances take place on porches, yards and driveways, in a celebration of our vibrant creative community. The festival has grown steadily since its inception—from 20 bands in 2007 to upwards of 150 in recent years—plus food vendors and a Makers Market, too. To learn more about the festival – including each year's original artwork, and how to volunteer, donate, or vend – visit <https://www.porchfest.org>.

44th Annual Apple Harvest Festival is September 25-27

A beloved seasonal tradition, this downtown

Ithaca Festival features local farms, cider, baked goods, handmade crafts, food vendors, live entertainment, fall flavors, and plenty of apples. This year, the Great Apple Pie Eating contest returns, with competitors racing through Hollenbeck's pies for first-, second-, and third-place medals while every entry supports The History Center in Tompkins County. Visit <https://www.downtownithaca.com/apple-harvest-festival/#ahf-schedule> for the schedule and all the details, plus photos and video from past festivals.

Registration is Open for the 2026 Tompkins Treasure Hunt

Just like last year, The History Center will hide \$10,000 in gems, and challenge Tompkins County to find them. For 2026, the puzzles explore 250 years of local history. These puzzles are genuinely challenging—so grab

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Events Calendar

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group-61525.

Tabletop RPG Brainstorming Group

Tompkins County Public Library, 6:00pm. Adults and teens. A gathering of the gaming community to support each other's creativity: Support all levels of experience; brainstorm ideas; design encounters & mechanics; talk out challenging game issues; share techniques, tools & triumphs. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/tabletop-role-playing-game-brainstorming-group-65415>.

3 Thursday

NARCAN Training

Tompkins County Public Library, 4:00pm. Join the REACH Project to learn how to recognize an overdose, respond to an overdose emergency, and administer NARCAN. This skill could help you save a life. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/copy-narcan-training-reach-64803>.

Downtown Summer Concert Series

Bernie Milton Pavilion, Ithaca Commons, Thursdays, 5:00-8:00pm. Free and fun for the entire family. Featuring local, regional, and national acts in a wide variety of genres including jazz, blues, reggae, hip-hop, rock, and more. Info/lineup: <https://www.downtownithaca.com/summer-concert-series/>.

4 Friday

Hupstate Circus Festival: To the Moon & Back

Avenue of the Friends at Tompkins County Public Library, 3:00pm. A charming, silly, all-ages circus show with a handmade set and a creative, problem-solving adventure story. Learn more about the Festival at hupstatecircus.org.

7 Monday

Teen Maker Monday

Tompkins County Public Library, 4:00-6:00pm. Participants will have the opportunity to learn and use Makerspace machines. A variety of crafting supplies will be available. This program is first come-first served for machines, materials, and assistance. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/teen-maker-mon-day-54443>.

8 Tuesday

Tween Book Club

Tompkins County Public Library, 4:00pm. Join us to read and discuss great books together, play games, eat snacks, and laugh a lot. Best for ages 8-12. Registration: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/tween-book-club-64810>.

9 Wednesday

Kitchen Theatre Presents: N/A by Mario Corres

September 9-27. In the House Minority Leader's office, two brilliant and relentless women collide. A fiery, fast-paced two-hander that asks what it means to lead, and what it takes to save a country. Schedule/tickets: www.kitchentheatre.org.

12 Saturday

We Declare: A Storytelling Project for Our Times

Tompkins County Public Library, 2:00pm. Local writers will perform their short, personal stories written in response to phrases taken from the Declaration of Independence, providing a snapshot into this moment in American history, a period with uncanny parallels to 1776. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/we-declare-storytelling-project-our-times-62879>.

End-of-Summer Concert & Dance: Ageless Jazz Band

Trumansburg Conservatory of Fine Arts, 7:00pm. Free! Refreshments served and cash bar. This incredible 18-piece Big Band has been lighting up the stage for over 40 years! Info: <https://www.tborgarts.org/event-calendar>.

15 Tuesday

Jennie's Book Club

Southworth Library, 10:00am. This month we're reading *The Book Woman's Daughter* by Kim Michele Richardson. All are welcome! Info: www.southworthlibrary.org.

Pokémon Club

Tompkins County Public Library, 4:00pm. Ages 5-14. Join us to learn and play the trading card game, participate in Pokémon-themed activities, meet fellow Trainers, and more. Space is limited - please register to hold your spot: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/pokemon-club-64421>.

Comic Book Club

Tompkins County Public Library, 6:30pm. The Comic Book Club of Ithaca is the oldest continuously-running comic book club in the country. It meets the first and third Tuesdays of the month, and meetings are free and open to pop culture fans of all ages. More info here: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/comic-book-club-ithaca-63872> and here: www.comicbookclub.org.

17 Thursday

Memoir Kickstart

Buffalo Street Books, 6:00pm. Learn how to get your memoir started! Presented by Story House Ithaca. Info: <https://www.storyhouseithaca.org>.

Books, Beer, and Baking

Hopshire Farm & Brewery, 7:00pm. Come learn about baking with beer! Guest speaker Marion Ferrer will provide some delicious samples of cheddar stout scones, dark chocolate stout cake, and seeded crackers. Info:

continued on page 14



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9 Tips to Help ADHD Kids Get and Stay Organized

By Kerrie McLoughlin

If you have a child with ADHD, you witness their normal daily struggles. Frustratingly, school poses even more challenges when a child juggles personal organization, getting homework done, keeping track of paperwork, managing hygiene, participating in activities, etc.

PsychCentral.com notes, "... ADHD affects the very skills that are required for success in school. Kids with ADHD have difficulty getting started, prioritizing, planning, managing their time and emotions, staying on task and focusing. It's the nature of the disorder, which impairs the executive functions of the brain."

If your child is experiencing extra stress this school year trying to keep up with everything, I've got some tips you can try for a much-needed reset. You'll be helping to build their confidence so they can succeed in school—and enjoy it as well!

Let them take ownership

Your child won't stick with any system they didn't help to create themselves. As one mom of three shared, "Your kid needs to do what works for them – they should be the one to come up with an organizational method."

Make a fresh start... every month

Start with a massive cleaning session before school begins to clear out any clutter. Clear out the backpack, the closet, the bookshelves. Then put regular (monthly) cleaning sessions on the calendar to keep up with the paper monster.

Limit choices and decision fatigue

Instead of complicated homework organization "solu-

tions," consider that less is usually more. One pocketed folder might work better for a class than a binder with too many tabs and pockets.

Purchase color-coded supplies

Dr. Lisa Adams, a school psychologist, suggests, "Depending on age, organize and color-code binders. Use the same color for all math, [another color for all science], etc." Choose colored binders with clear fronts for easy labeling. Staples has a great line of colored 2-inch binders with a large pocket in the front cover and customizable front and sides.

Additional supplies to consider, depending on the child: Post-it notes and tape flags in various sizes and colors; bins in various sizes and colors; flat drawer organizers; Washi tape for extra personalization; pens, pencils, Sharpies and highlighters they love and will actually use.

Tame paper explosions

Encourage your child to keep a small notebook on hand for jotting notes, and then transfer all the little jots to *one place* (i.e. the perfect planner) in a timely manner. This goes for notes created on phone apps as well. If reminders aren't put in the right place, they are lost forever.

Work that planner!

Have your child commit 15 minutes each morning to preparing for the day and 15 minutes at night reviewing and thinking about what could have gone differently. Rebelling against the planner is normal; create rewards for sticking

continued on page 15

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Events Calendar

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18 Friday

Teen Studio

Johnson Museum of Art, 4:00–6:00pm. Free. Unleash your creativity, experiment with an array of materials, and have fun alongside your peers. Drop by the Museum's Cox Studio on Floor 2L for artistic inspiration in a stress-free environment, with snacks provided. Facilitated by Cornell undergraduate fine-arts majors and open to all middle and high school students. Info: museum.cornell.edu.

19 Saturday

Fall Guitar Concert Series: Kinloch Nelson & Muriel Anderson

Trumansburg Conservatory of Fine Arts, 7:00pm. Kinloch Nelson has experience in an impressive number of genres including classical, ragtime, American primitive, Celtic, new-age, R&B, and rock. Muriel Anderson is renowned for her expertise on the 20-string harp-guitar. Tickets: <https://www.tborgarts.org/event-calendar>.

Ira Glass: Stories for a Saturday Night

State Theatre, 8:00pm. The *This American Life* host brings a night of storytelling in the style he pioneered on his hit radio show. Whether you're a long-time fan of the show or discovering his work for the first time, you're in for an evening of funny and moving stories about people who may as well be your neighbors, your friends, or you. Tickets: <https://stateofithaca.org>.

20 Sunday

Porchfest 2026

Fall Creek & Northside neighborhoods. Porchfest is a free music festival that is open for anyone to attend or perform. Performances take place on porches, and in yards and driveways, in a celebration of our vibrant creative community. Learn more, volunteer, donate, and more at <https://www.porchfest.org>.

22 Tuesday

LEGO Family Build Night

Tompkins County Public Library, 5:30pm. Buckets of LEGO will be provided for participants to borrow for their builds. Participants will also have the opportunity to display their creations in the Youth Services section for one week. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/lego-family-build-night-64442>.

23 Wednesday

LGBTQ+ Youth Group

Tompkins County Public Library, 4:30pm. Join us to do crafts, play games, and socialize. Whether you're lesbian, gay, bi, trans, questioning, or just trying to figure things out—we're here for you. Registration is not required; feel free to join us! Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/lgbtq-youth-group-61528>.

25 Friday

Apple Harvest Festival

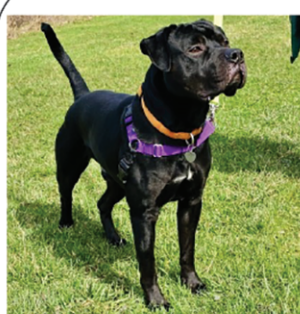
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Looking for a New Friend? The SPCA of Tompkins County is the place to look! Meet our Featured Pets!



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Bo (63 lbs) is on the lookout for his new home to share his ball chasing skills! He'll really shine with older kids who can be respectful of his boundaries, and have the endurance to throw Bo's favorite stick or ball until the cows come home! He's also likely to get along well with another bouncy, happy dog.



SPCA
Tompkins County

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Ithaca, NY 14850
607) 257-1822
www.SPCAonline.com
NYS REG #RR254



Organized

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with it. (There are a zillion different planners, so review a bunch on YouTube before you buy.)

Handle that homework

A spot designated solely for doing homework and nothing else is key. No phones or other distractions are allowed. Start with the most difficult subjects first and take frequent activity breaks. Dana Baker-Williams, mom of an ADHD child, says, "She and I would set up a quiet place for her to study and set a schedule for homework. She had pens that she could use on her mirror closet doors to write out assignments and due dates. Then she could prioritize better. We'd also break assignments into more bite-size pieces, if they were large or long projects."

Dr. Adams adds, "Develop a system of retrieving assignments, a time for doing them, a time for turning them in. Provide continuous parent oversight until the system is learned."

Do tasks and assignments in small chunks

Instead of sitting them down until they are done with all their homework, try setting a timer for 15-20 minutes and allowing them to get up, move around, and then come back to it. Just don't let them wander too far!

A place for everything

Once the homework is finished, get your child into the habit of putting their binder or textbook back into their backpack. Keep the backpack in the same spot all the time. Set up files using a milk crate system or similar, and file papers right away. Don't let them pile up or scatter. When everything has a place, your child won't have to worry about constantly losing things and trying to find them again, wasting precious time.

You can boost your kid's confidence and help make school feel manageable by teaching them organization skills and working with teachers for long-term success throughout the coming school year and beyond. These are skills they'll use their entire lives in many areas.

Kerrie McLoughlin (TheKerrieShow.com) is a middle-aged mom with ADHD, and color-coding her five kids has been the solution to many challenges! She enjoys finding new ways to support others who are neurodivergent.

News & Notes

continued from page 11

friends, family, or coworkers and work together! All you need is a smartphone, curiosity, and people you like solving problems with. Register your team today, and on launch day (September

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Events Calendar

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Downtown Ithaca, September 25-27. Featuring local farms, apple growers, cider, baked goods, handmade crafts, food vendors, live entertainment, and community activities, the festival celebrates the harvest season while highlighting the businesses, restaurants, shops, artists, and community partners that make Downtown Ithaca a year-round destination. Info: <https://www.downtownithaca.com/apple-harvest-festival/#ahf-about>.

Stitch Club

Tompkins County Public Library, every other Friday at 1:00pm. Adults and teens 16+. An opportunity for knitters, crocheters, needle-pointers, and other stitchers of all levels to come together and work, and share projects, skills, and advice. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/copy-stitch-club-62306>.

27 Sunday

Hamilton Singalong and Karaoke Brunch

Auburn Public Theater, 2:00pm. All-ages and uncensored. This isn't open mic karaoke – it's a fully-structured Hamilton experience where fans step into the roles and the entire room sings every word. Brunch will be available on site at Cafe 108. Info/tickets: www.auburnpublictheater.org/events.

28 Monday

Silent Book Club

Southworth Library, 6:30pm. This month's featured book is *A Daughter of Fair Verona* by Christina Dodd. Free copies of this book will be available, or bring a book of your own and enjoy some snacks and quiet reading time at the Library. Info: www.southworthlibrary.org.

29 Tuesday

Broadway in Binghamton Presents: Mystic Pizza

Forum Theater, September 29 and 30 at 7:30pm. Based on the beloved 1988 rom-com that launched the career of Julia Roberts, *Mystic Pizza* is a new musical featuring hit songs from the 80s and 90s. Tickets: <https://nacentertainment.com/broadway-in-binghamton-mystic-pizza/>.

October

1 Thursday

NARCAN Training

Tompkins County Public Library, 4:00pm. Join the REACH Project to learn how to recognize an overdose, respond to an overdose emergency, and administer NARCAN. This skill could help you save a life. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/copy-narcan-training-reach-64804>.

AI: Fact vs Fiction

Southworth Library, 6:30pm. Join Peter John Loewen, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences and Professor of Government at Cornell, for a conversation. Info: www.southworthlibrary.org.

2 Friday

Autumn BioBlitz

October 2-5. Virtual, on your own time – join us from wherever you are in the Cayuga Lake basin! We are calling all nature observers to document the life around us using the iNaturalist app. This event is part of our series of seasonal bioblitzes, to help document the diversity of life in our region over time as the climate and other factors change. You don't need to be an expert to participate! Questions? Contact Ingrid Zabel at zabel@priweb.org.

3 Saturday

Youth Naturalist Series

Lime Hollow Nature Center, 9:00am-3:00pm. Monthly outdoor adventures for ages 6-12. Our experienced instructors will take kids off the beaten path to explore hidden trails, discover the wonders of the wild, and master real outdoor skills in a safe, supportive environment. This year's focus: carving! Info/schedule: <https://www.limehollow.org/youth-naturalist-series>.

5 Monday

Teen Maker Monday

Tompkins County Public Library, 4:00-6:00pm. Participants will have the opportunity to learn and use Makerspace machines. A variety of crafting supplies will be available. This program is first come-first served for machines, materials, and assistance. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/teen-maker-monday-54443>.

6 Tuesday

Teen & Tween Graphic Novel Book Club

Tompkins County Public Library, 4:00pm. A monthly meetup to socialize, eat snacks, and talk about graphic novels! Learn more at <https://www.tcpl.org/event/teen-tween-graphic-novel-book-club-65095>.

7 Wednesday

Tabletop RPG Brainstorming Group

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News & Notes

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12) you'll receive the first puzzle. Each puzzle leads to a unique location, where you'll find a QR code. The final puzzle leads to the hidden treasure. Learn more and register at www.tompkinstreasure.com.

Racker Announces New Community Event

Day in the Park kicks off on Saturday, August 29th from noon-3:00pm at Stewart Park. After 12 years of extraordinary generosity and support, raising more than \$1.5 million for Racker's Early Childhood programs, Racker is celebrating the legacy of the Racker Rivals

Big Red charity hockey game with a community-wide event and a new long-term fundraising strategy: Even Years We Party, Odd Years We Play.

Day in the Park is a family-friendly fundraising celebration supporting Racker's critical programs for people with disabilities. Held at the fully-inclusive Stewart Park, the event will feature appearances by the Big Red hockey teams, live music from

Flame the Band, free carousel rides, food trucks, a sensory pathway complete with crafts, movement activities, lawn games, prizes, and other inclusive, mission-focused activities for all ages.

Racker Rivals Big Red will return in 2027 and continue every other year during odd-numbered

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New School Year

continued from page 6

We can let go of unrealistic expectations during the transition from summer break to the new school year – and give ourselves permission to try

those fun ideas in a few weeks when we feel more grounded and centered. A happy, calm parent is more important than a sandwich shaped like an animal.

Grace

Let's just say it right now – we're going to drop the ball. At some point, we're going to miss something or turn in a form late. Last year I forgot to pick up my son's inhaler from the nurse at the end of the school year. We all lose track of things sometimes. So let's start the year with a bit of grace for ourselves and one another.

Instead of beating ourselves up over getting the wrong color folder or forgetting to send a water bottle, let's remember that we're all here doing our best to love our kids well. And no folder or missed bus will ever be as important as that.

Rebecca Hastings traded the classroom for writing when she stayed home with her three children. You can find her at RebeccaHastings.net and on Amazon.

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News & Notes

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years. This rotating schedule allows Racker to introduce fresh experiences, engage new audiences, and better align with the needs of community partners and supporters. Learn more at www.racker.org.

The Museum of the Earth Welcomes New Lungfish

There's a new addition to the exhibits at Museum of the Earth: a live South American lungfish named Minhoca. Minhoca ("Min" for short) means "worm" in Portuguese. Min replaces Tembea ("Tem"), the African lungfish that had been on display at the Museum until she passed away late last year due to old age.

Warren Allmon, Director of the Paleontological Research Institution, the organization that operates the Museum, explains that having a live lungfish on display "helps visitors understand the kind of animal that lived in New York State and Pennsylvania more than 350 million years ago, during the Devonian Period." Fossilized lungfishes and their burrows can be found in rocks in the Catskill Mountains, for example, which was a wide river delta during the Devonian. The lungfish burrow on display at the Museum comes from Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania, and is accompanied by numerous other lungfish fossils. Over time, visitors will be able to watch Min grow from a six-inch juvenile into a several-foot-long fish. Learn more at www.priweb.org.

Summer Fun at the Sciencenter

Dive into an underwater adventure at Ocean Bound, a new, interactive summer exhibition. Ocean Bound offers a unique and breathtaking introduction to the majesty of the ocean. Experience coral reefs in HD, and make rain cascade down mountains, through rivers, and finally to the ocean. Journey through watersheds to see how our actions on land affect our oceans, and learn the science behind keeping our water clean. Discover how scientists are protecting aquatic

habitats, and learn simple ways that you can help make a difference.

For outdoor fun, check out the science-themed mini-golf course and explore the Sciencenter's 2000-square-foot, multi-level Science Park where you can experiment with sound, motion, water, and physics. Little explorers ages four and under will love the Curiosity Playground, designed for small hands and curious minds. Learn more at www.sciencenter.org.

Special Fall Events at Ithaca Children's Garden

Ithaca Children's Garden is an award-winning, three-acre public children's garden designed for kids, enjoyed by all, and driven by a mission to connect children to nature to create a more beautiful, resilient, and just world.

Scarecrow Jubilee is ICG's annual outdoor autumn festival, held this year on October 17. Build your own scarecrow, carve pumpkins, enjoy live performances, activities and games, and make memories that will last for harvests to come. If you're looking for a free, family-friendly community event this coming fall season, make Scarecrow Jubilee your destination. To learn more about these events and the Children's Garden, visit www.ithacachildrengarden.org.

Submit your items to News & Notes:

To submit press releases, email jgraney@twcny.rr.com, fax 607-347-4302, or mail Ithaca Parent & Teen, PO Box 242, Etna, NY 13062.

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 Offer valid only at YMCA of Ithaca. Additional restrictions may apply.



Events Calendar

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Tompkins County Public Library, 6:00pm. Adults and teens. A gathering of the gaming community to support each other's creativity: Support all levels of experience; brainstorm ideas; design encounters & mechanics; talk out challenging game issues; share techniques, tools & triumphs. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/tabletop-role-playing-game-brainstorming-group-65415>.

8 Thursday

DSP Shows Presents: Brad Williams—the Tall Tales Tour

State Theatre, 7:00pm. Williams started doing stand-up comedy as a teenager and has been touring successfully ever since, routinely selling out prestigious venues all over the country and world. His first one-hour special, *Fun Size*, was the highest rated special on Showtime. Tickets: <https://stateofithaca.org>.

9 Friday

Stitch Club

Tompkins County Public Library, every other Friday at 1:00pm. Adults and teens 16+. An opportunity for knitters, crocheters, needle-pointers, and other stitchers of all levels to come together and work, and share projects, skills, and advice. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/copy-stitch-club-62306>.

Ithaca College Theatre Presents: Anton Chekov's *Three Sisters*

Clark Theatre, October 9-13. The production finds the Prozorov family in the Soviet Union of the mid-1980s, during the uneasy early years of Glasnost and Perestroika. Schedule/tickets:

<https://www.ithaca.edu/academics/school-music-theatre-and-dance/center-theatre-and-dance-productions>.

10 Saturday

Steve Gonsalves Live: *A Life With Ghosts*

Hangar Theatre, 6:30pm. An immersive evening of hauntings, history, and true tales from Steve's revealing archive. The evening also includes humor, audience interaction, and a live Q&A. Tickets: <https://hangartheatre.org/event/a-life-with-ghosts/>.

11 Sunday

DSP Shows Presents: Fred Armisen—Comedy for Musicians But Everyone is Welcome

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Events Calendar

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State Theatre, 7:00pm. Fred Armisen is a comedian, writer, producer, and musician. He is an 11-season veteran of *Saturday Night Live*, and for 10 years was band leader of the 8G Band on *Late Night With Seth Meyers*. He was in the original cast of *All In: Comedy About Love* on Broadway. Tickets: <https://stateofithaca.org>.

14 Wednesday

Kitchen Theatre Presents: *Something About Money* by Alexander Thomas

October 14-25. A funny, surprising, and personal solo performance that will make you laugh, cry, and question your entire relationship to money. Schedule/tickets: www.kitchentheatre.org.

16 Friday

Ithaca College Theatre Presents: *Sender*

McCarroll Theater, October 16-18. This stunningly frank, full-hearted dramedy asks us to confront the hard truths we run away from, and shines a light on what adulthood really means: moving forward. Schedule/tickets: <https://www.ithaca.edu/academics/school-music-theatre-and-dance/center-theatre-and-dance-productions>.

17 Saturday

Scarecrow Jubilee

Ithaca Children's Garden, 1:00-4:00pm. Build your own scarecrow, carve pumpkins, laugh during a puppet show, dance to live music, enjoy activities and games, and make memories that will last for harvests to come. If you've been looking for a free, family-friendly community event this coming fall season, make Scarecrow Jubilee your destination. Info:

<https://www.ithacachildrengarden.org/portfolio/scarecrow-jubilee/>.

18 Sunday

Family Classics Picture Show: *The Ghost & Mr. Chicken* (1966)

Cinemapolis, 2:30pm. Free! Starring Don Knotts. A timid typesetter hasn't a ghost of a chance of becoming a reporter—until he decides to solve a murder mystery and ends up spending a fright-filled night in a haunted house. Info: www.cinemapolis.org.

19 Monday

Teen Maker Monday

Tompkins County Public Library, 4:00-6:00pm. Participants will have the opportunity to learn and use Makerspace machines. A variety of crafting supplies will be available. This program is first come-first served for machines, materials, and assistance. Info: <https://www.tcpl.org/event/teen-maker-monday-54443>.

Dallas Morse Coors Concert Series:

Chucho Valdés 85th Birthday Celebration

Bailey Hall, Cornell, 7:30pm. NEA Jazz Master and winner of seven Grammy and seven Latin Grammy Awards, the Cuban pianist, composer and arranger Chucho Valdés is the most influential figure in modern Afro-Cuban jazz. Tickets: <https://www.cornell-concertseries.com/2627-season>.

November

6 Friday

IC Theatre Presents: *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*

Hoerner Theatre, November 6-9. Winner of the Tony and the Drama Desk Awards for Best Book, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* has charmed audiences across the country with its effortless wit and humor. Schedule/tickets: <https://www.ithaca.edu/academics/school-music-theatre-and-dance/center-theatre-and-dance-productions>.

Parents are encouraged to contact each event for age appropriateness.

Submit Calendar Items for the Winter Issue covering early December through early March no later than November 18, 2026.

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Running to Places brings together middle and high school students to make friends and to develop critical life skills through the art of theatre. We believe so strongly that everyone should have equitable access to these life-changing opportunities, we've made participation for our students and attendance at shows 100% FREE! This is only possible with the support of our community - folks just like you.

Find out about our next show and support R2P by visiting www.runningtoplaces.org or scanning the QR code



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We the People

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A FILM BY
KEN BURNS, SARAH BOTSTEIN & DAVID SCHMIDT

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DON'T MISS IT!

Ithaca Parent & Teen's

**Winter issue will be on Newsstands
 early December, 2026.**

**Event Listings, Advertising & Calendar
 deadline is November 18th, 2026.**
Contact jgraney@twcny.rr.com 607-327-1226.

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