

Merrimack Valley

May 2025

Parent

**Defining
Family**

**Things to Do:
Merrimack Valley
Community
Calendar**

**Summer
Camps &
Schools**

Free

www.merrimackvalleyparent.com

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Camp Cody is a co-ed, overnight summer camp in New Hampshire for ages 7-15. We are a technology-free environment where kids build confidence, independence, and lasting friendships!

CHILDREN'S HEALTH CARE

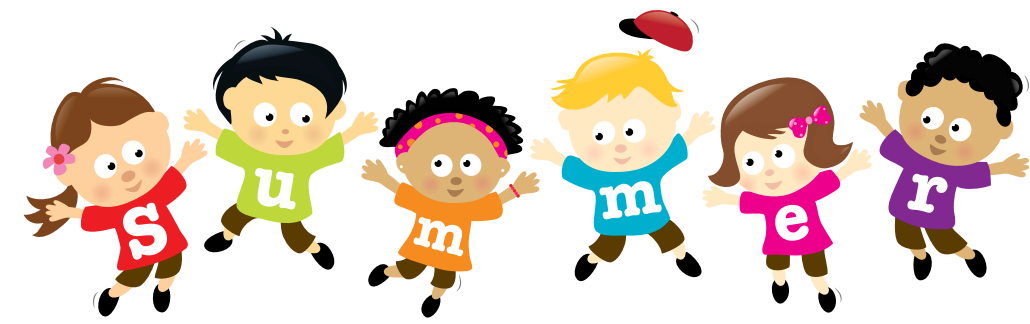
We're here to support your family's physical health and emotional wellbeing.

We are grateful to be part of the Merrimack Valley and Greater Newburyport communities.

Watch for details on CHC's third office location opening summer 2025 in Rowley, MA!

Caring for Northshore families for over 50 years.

We welcome new patients! Haverhill (978) 373-6557 | Newburyport (978) 465-7121 | chcmass.com



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9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

SESSION I: 07/07 - 07/28
SESSION II: 07/30 - 08/20

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Miss Cathy's
 I LOVE BOOKS
 Children's Book Reviews

By Cathy A. Morrow

It's MAY!!

The sky seems bluer and the air is filled with the wonderful smells of blooming flowers and children's joy filled voices playing outside. This month I have chosen two books that celebrate love and the wonderful accomplishments that even young children can achieve.

HUG ME LITTLE BUNNY
 Finger Puppet Book
 Chronicle Books, Author and
 Publisher
 Best for Ages 6 mos and up

This is a sweet and loveable book. With each adorable illustration the meaning of this book becomes clear, the child reading the book is deserving of love.

Terry Teddy and I give this book Four Paws Up.



Even before you open this book, Little Bunny has his arms showing and open to give you a hug. With each page turn Little Bunny extends his hand to hold your hand as you explore the world around you together. His arms help you find treats and at the end of the day, he welcomes you with one of his special hugs. With each hug, Little Bunny lets you know just how much he loves you.

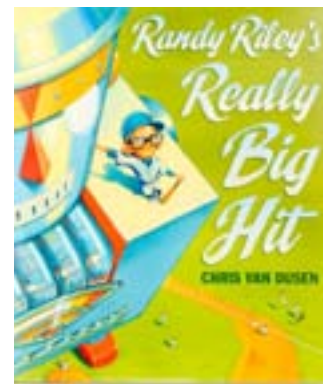
RANDY RILEY'S REALLY BIG HIT
 Chris Van Dusen, Author
 Candlewick Press, Publishers
 Best for Ages 8 and older

Randy Riley had two things that mean a lot to him. One of them was baseball and the other wace. Unfortunately, for Randy, as hard as he tried, he was so deep in thought when at bat that the ball whizzed by him, He thought about exactly how to hit the baseball well in order to get a hit. His other interest in outer space stayed in his mind even when riding his bike, He thought it would be great to ride a bike on Mars. Randy also had several robots. He even used them to stage a game of

baseball. One night Randy saw something through his telescope. Randy knew he had to act! His calculations showed that a fireball he saw was earth-bound. He had to act fast, but noone was listening. He decided with the help of his robots he just might save the day. Is Randy correct? Can Randy and his robot save the day?

This is an imaginative story that shows just because you are not so great at baseball, doesn't mean you can't save the day. Illustrations are well done and imaginative.

Terry Teddy and I give this book Four Paws Up.



DEFINING FAMILY

By Maria Luisa Salcines



My grandparents' generation defined a traditional family as a married man and woman with children. Today, the definition of modern day is very different. A family can be a one-parent household with children. It can also mean any arrangement of people who call themselves a family.

Before learning about parenting from books and television became fashionable, the older women in the family taught parenting skills. When a baby was born, these women would help the new mother learn how to bathe and care for her newborn. There existed a built-in network of advice that was free of charge.

Parenting skills, values, and traditions were passed on from generation to generation. Today, very few families live near each other. Divorce is so common, and society has established an ever-changing family system that accepts just about anything.

In the past, we took the family for granted. Today, the family is an issue on the political agenda. We finally realize that we need to reexamine some things and return to more traditional aspects of family life.

In his book, *The Future of the American Family*, George Barna discusses the problems families face. Barna believes that in our fast-paced culture, we need to reestablish the centrality and the priority of parenting.

If parents understood the importance of their roles in their child's life and if, we would encourage people and support them in their parenting roles as a society. He believes this would be one of the best things that could happen to American culture and probably the world.

Parents need to spend more time developing a healthy family. When we invest in the lives of young people, especially young children, that's what determines the nature of the world.

Barna points out that some parents are willing to believe that quality time is important in a relationship, not the quantity of time spent. It helps parents feel good about their decisions as they're trying to experience everything in life without making any sacrifices. He calls this "family and time" because the reality is that although a parent and child can sit together and watch a movie together, there's nothing taking place interpersonally. Parents aren't building a family. They're just building a residential facility where people live together but don't necessarily feel comfortable with each other.

Being a parent takes enormous energy and mental and emotional self-control. Daily responsibilities can fill our calendars and overwhelm us with things we need to get done. Life is a constant juggling act between our children's activities and ours.

Cell phones, iPads, social media, and kids' tablets have changed our society. We use some of these methods to babysit our children, and we are harming their mental health.

Rates of depression and anxiety are alarming. More than ever, parents need to spend time with their children. The bridge of understanding and love cannot be built by – someday or electronic gadgets.

Parents need to reestablish their priorities, even if it means sacrificing their lifestyle to spend more time with their children.

Eckhart Tolle said, "Most humans are never fully present in the now because unconsciously, they believe that the next moment must be more important than this one. But then you miss your whole life, which is never not now."

Our children are missing out on a play-based childhood and parents who are more focused on their gadgets than on them. This is having disastrous consequences for children and their family connections.

Children need your time, your attention, and your love.

Maria Luisa Salcines is a freelance writer, author, and certified parent coach with The Academy of Parenting Education and Coaching in Redirecting Children's Behavior and Redirecting for a Cooperative Classroom. She co-authored You Can Do It, Chickadee, and You Can Do It, Tex, award-winning children's books about depression and anxiety. Follow her on Instagram @mlsalcinespowerof-family, @youcandoitbooks, or contact her on her website FamilyLifeAndFindingHappy.com.

These books were generously provided by
Jabberwocky Bookshop, Newburyport
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Merrimack Valley Calendar of Events

May



Thursday, May 1
BOOK BABBLE: "THE INHERITANCE GAMES" (AGES 12-18)
 THURSDAY, MAY 1 7:00—8:30 PM
 Study Room Nevins Library 305 Broadway, Methuen, MA, 01844
 Book Babble: "The Inheritance Games" (Ages 12-18)

If you're a fan of books and just can't stop talking about the last one you read, Book Babble is the group for you. If you'd like us to put each month's book on hold for you, please fill out this form: <https://forms.gle/o6pyJ8tJBRKJ3Q6d8>. This month we'll be reading *The Inheritance Games* by Jennifer Lynn Barnes. When a Connecticut teenager inherits vast wealth and an eccentric estate from the richest man in Texas, she must also live with his surviving family and solve a series of puzzles to discover how she earned her inheritance.

Please use a personal email address, not a school-issued email, when registering. Due to your school's network security settings, we are unable to contact people who use school-issued email addresses.

THURSDAY ALL AGES STORY TIME WITH MISS ALLISON
 THURSDAY, MAY 11 1:00—11:30 AM
 Children's Activity Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950
 Thursday All Ages Story Time with Miss Allison

Join us for a fun morning of stories, songs, and rhymes for kids ages 0-6. We have limited space, so we require registration to prevent overcrowding and to improve the quality of our programming. Please register your entire party so we have an accurate headcount. You are welcome to call us the morning of a program to ask whether there are any spaces remaining. Our goal is to provide access for as many people as possible. Please choose only one story time to attend per week. Please take note of whether you are registering for the WEDNESDAY or THURSDAY all ages story time session!

Friday, May 2
FRIDAY BABIES WITH MISS ANNA
 FRIDAY, MAY 2 11:00—11:30 AM
 Program Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA
 Friday Babies with Miss Anna

Our Activity Room is temporarily unavailable, so our programs will be in the Program Room at the back of the building. It's story time, baby! Join Miss Anna for songs, fingerplays, and stories. Here are the important things to know about this program:
 - This story time is for children under a year old or who are not yet walking.
 - Extra grown-ups are welcome! Please register everyone in your group so we can make sure there is room for everyone.
 - If your plans change, please cancel your registration online or by calling us so that others are able to join us.
 - Our goal is to provide access for as many people as possible. Please choose only one story time to attend per week.
 See you there!

Monday, May 5
READ TO MURPHY THE DOG! (AGES 5-18)
 MONDAY, MAY 5 4:00—4:15 PM
 Study Room Nevins Library 305 Broadway, Methuen, MA, 01844

Read to Murphy the Dog! (Ages 5-18) We are delighted when Murphy the Dog visits the library, where he happily listens to children read aloud to him! Reading to a dog gives kids a chance to practice their reading skills with a friendly, nonjudgmental audience — a great setting for anxious readers. Each child gets a fifteen-minute session with Murphy; please register for just one slot.

If your plans change after you register and you won't be able to come to the program, please have the courtesy to cancel your registration so that children on the waiting list can take your place. You can find a link to cancel your plans on your registration confirmation email, or you can call us at 978-686-4080 x26.

STORIES & SONGS (AGES INFANT-5)
 MONDAY, MAY 5 5:30—6:00 PM
 Garden Room Nevins Library 305 Broadway, Methuen, MA, 01844

Stories & Songs (Ages infant-5) Here's an entertaining program that gives families an evening option for their young children, including a special guest from Greater Lawrence Community Action Council — come join us for stories, music, and fun! No registration is required.
 No Registration Required

Tuesday, May 6
TABLETOP CLUB
 TUESDAY, MAY 6 3:30—5:00 PM
 Program Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA
 Grades 5-12.

For grades 5-12. Registration is requested but not required. Are you a fan of... Board games? Dungeons and Dragons? Magic the Gathering? Then the Tabletop Club is for you! Once a month we set up a space for you to get your game on! Make sure to bring any gaming supplies you'd like to use. Tabletop Club meets on the first Tuesday of each month (unless there is a holiday). Once you are registered for the club, you are registered for the whole series. This series goes from January through June.

COOKIES & COLORING
 TUESDAY, MAY 6 3:00—4:30 PM
 Children's Activity Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950
 Cookies & Coloring

What could be better than an afternoon of cookies & coloring? Join us to relax with coloring sheets, crayons and markers, and individually wrapped cookies. Drop in any time between 3:00 and 4:30. Kids of all ages and abilities are welcome. Please contact the Children's Room if you have concerns about allergies, as we want to provide a safe and enjoyable program for everyone.
 No Registration Required

Wednesday, May 7
HOMESCHOOL HANG OUT!
 WEDNESDAY, MAY 7 10:30 AM—12:30 PM
 Side Lawn Amesbury Public Library 149 Main St., Amesbury, MA, 01913
 Homeschoolers of any age

Our outdoor space is a great place to hang out, socialize, and have some fun! We'll make it better by having some self-serve activity stations set up so that families can explore different things together. Homeschoolers are welcome to drop-in to this informal meet up at any time and all ages are welcome.

This space is outdoors so dress accordingly. Can be cancelled in case of bad weather. For more information, contact the Youth Services Department at ys@amesburylibrary.org or 978-388-8148 x4
 No pets, only service animals are allowed

at our programs
 Free No Registration Required

Thursday, May 8
TEEN GAMING CLUB (AGES 12-18)
 THURSDAY, MAY 8 7:00—8:00 PM
 Garden Room Nevins Library 305 Broadway, Methuen, MA, 01844
 Teen Gaming Club (Ages 12-18)

Come learn some new board and card games, or play a familiar favorite! The Nintendo Switch will also be available to play. Different games will be available each month for you to try out! Please use a personal email address, not a school-issued email, when registering. Due to your school's network security settings, we are unable to contact people who use school-issued email addresses.

MIDDLE GRADE BOOK CLUB (AGES 8-12)
 THURSDAY, MAY 8 3:30—4:30 PM
 Children's Activity Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950
 Middle Grade Book Club (Ages 8-12)

Not sure what to read next? Looking for a fun after-school activity? Check out our Middle Grade Book Club (Ages 8-12)! Each month we'll meet to discuss a different book, play games, and do crafts. On May 8th we'll meet to discuss *The Luminous Life of Lucy Landry* by Anna Rose Johnson. Call the library or log in to your MVLC account to request a copy of the book today!

"Lucy, a spirited French-Ojibwe orphan, is sent to the stormy waters of Lake Superior to live with a mysterious family of light-house-keepers—and, she hopes, to find the legendary necklace her father spent his life seeking..."
 Registration is requested but drop-ins are also welcome. Caregivers are not required to stay for this program but kids should know how to get in touch with an adult should the need arise.

D&D: ROAMING REALMS (GRADES 7-12)
 THURSDAY, MAY 8 3:30—5:00 PM
 Program Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA
 For Grades 7-12. This program is registration only. Space is limited so register right away!

Join the adventure guild and explore the Roaming Realms! All you need is your wit and a level 5 character sheet. Premade

character sheets will be provided as well. This D&D club is for new players as well as experienced ones.

D&D will be held in person in the programming room on the first floor of the library. When registering, please use an email address you check frequently. Emails cannot be sent to school email addresses as they will not receive outside emails.

Saturday, May 10
CRAFT BUFFET

SATURDAY, MAY 10 1:00—4:00 PM
 Children's Activity Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950
 Craft Buffet
 Stop by our Activity Room, have a snack, and enjoy a variety of simple, no-mess crafts!

Drop in any time between 1:00 and 4:00 p.m. This program is open to kids of all ages and abilities.
 No Registration Required

Monday, May 12
LEGO BLOCK PARTY (ALL AGES)
 MONDAY, MAY 12 6:30—7:30 PM
 Garden Room Nevins Library 305 Broadway, Methuen, MA, 01844

We've opened our LEGO Block Party to all ages, and we encourage families to come build and create together (using our huge supply of LEGOs)!

If your plans change after you register and you won't be able to come to the program, please have the courtesy to cancel your registration so that children on the waiting list can take your place. You can find a link to cancel your plans on your registration confirmation email, or you can call us at 978-686-4080 x26.

Tuesday, May 13
TEEN ANIME CLUB (AGES 13-18)
 TUESDAY, MAY 13 4:00—5:30 PM
 Study Room Nevins Library 305 Broadway, Methuen, MA, 01844
 Teen Anime Club (Ages 13-18)

If you are a fan of anime, or just curious about it, this is the club for you. Come to watch and discuss your favorite anime, draw manga, or just hang out!

Please use a personal email address, not a school-issued email, when registering. Due to your school's network security settings, we are unable to contact people who use school-issued email addresses.

SPROUTING SCIENTISTS (AGES 3-5)
 TUESDAY, MAY 13 1:00—1:45 PM
 Garden Room Nevins Library 305 Broadway, Methuen, MA, 01844
 Sprouting Scientists (Ages 3-5)
 This program is a wonderful op-

portunity for caregivers and children to explore science together with stories and hands-on activities that show how engaging science can be.

If your plans change after you register and you won't be able to come to the program, please have the courtesy to cancel your registration so that children on the waiting list can take your place. You can find a link to cancel your plans on your registration confirmation email, or you can call us at 978-686-4080 x26.

POKEMON CLUB!
 TUESDAY, MAY 13 3:00—4:30 PM
 Children's Activity Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950
 Pokemon Club!

Do you like Pokemon? Would you like to hang out with other kids who like Pokemon? Drop in for our Pokemon Club! You can bring your cards, see what others have, or play Pokemon. No prior knowledge is necessary.

For grades K-5. Siblings are welcome. Grown-ups, please be advised: we request that attendees don't trade cards unless their adult is there to say it's okay.
 No Registration Required

Wednesday, May 14
MOVIE MATINEE: SONIC 3 (IN PERSON)
 WEDNESDAY, MAY 14 2:30—4:30 PM
 Program Room Newburyport Public Li-

brary, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA
 Sonic 3
 Join us for our Movie Matinees on Wednesday afternoons.

This week we will be screening "Sonic 3" (2024) starring Jim Carrey, Ben Schwartz, and Keanu Reeves at 2:30 pm. Run time 1 hour 50 minutes. "Sonic, Knuckles, and Tails reunite against a powerful new adversary, Shadow, a mysterious villain with powers unlike anything they have faced before. With their abilities outmatched, Team Sonic must seek out an unlikely alliance."

Come and enjoy the theater-like screen and sound system with fellow film buffs. This free event will be held in the Program Room and all are welcome!

*Please note that movie showings are subject to change with short notice. For the most current movie schedule, we recommend checking with the library directly. The Library has assistive listening technology for individuals with reduced ranges of hearing that sends sound directly to a hearing device. Contact the library at 978-465-4428 ext. 2 before the program to learn more about this and other assistive technology options. Come and enjoy the theater-like screen and sound system with fellow film buffs. This free event will be held in the Program Room and all are welcome!
 No Registration Required

Monday, May 19
BOOKS & BUBBLES
 (AGES INFANT-18 MOS.)
 MONDAY, MAY 19 2:00—2:30 PM
 Garden Room Nevins Library 305 Broadway, Methuen, MA, 01844
 What do little ones love? Books! What else do they love? Bubbles! This language-enrichment program features fun songs and fingerplays, stories, and everyone's favorite finale: bubbles! No registration is required, and big brothers and sisters can also attend.
 No Registration Required

Tuesday, May 20
CRAFT CORNER
 TUESDAY, MAY 20 3:00—4:30 PM
 Children's Activity Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950
 Craft Corner
 Join Miss Isa and make a simple craft. This program is open to kids of all ages and abilities. Drop in any time between 3:00 and 4:30 p.m.
 No Registration Required

OBSTACLE COURSE!
 TUESDAY, MAY 20 4:30—6:00 PM
 Side Lawn Amesbury Public Library 149 Main St., Amesbury, MA, 01913
 Obstacle Course!
 Best for kids 5 and up
 Join us for a joyous obstacle course with

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a fun theme! Great for kids kindergarten and up with a special course for preschool and below! Come explore some new challenges!

This program is outdoors so bring water and sunscreen! If it is pouring rain, this program will be cancelled.

For questions or more information contact the Youth Services Dept at ys@amesburylibrary.org or 978-388-8148 x4

Want to stay informed of upcoming programs? Sign up for the newsletter HERE
No Registration Required

Thursday, May 22

STEAM STORYTIME (2 - 6 YEAR OLDS)
THURSDAY, MAY 22 10:30—11:15 AM
Side Lawn Amesbury Public Library 149
Main St., Amesbury, MA, 01913
STEAM Storytime (2 - 6 year olds)
Ages: 2 year - 6 years

Join Rebecca for in-person storytime in our side yard! This storytime is great for ages 2 to 6 year olds with stories and interactive activities. The end of storytime includes stations set up around the group to explore!

Program is outdoors so bring a blanket or chair to sit on (we have some as well).

Please read our expectations for attendance and we look forward to seeing at Storytime!

No registration required but program is outdoors so if the weather is bad, this program will be cancelled

For questions or more information contact

the Youth Services Dept at ys@amesburylibrary.org or 978-388-8148 x4

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Free No Registration Required

Friday, May 23

One Up Games (Ages 8 and up)
FRIDAY, MAY 23 1:00—4:00 PM
Garden Room Nevins Library 305 Broadway, Methuen, MA, 01844
One Up Games (Ages 8 and up)

Join us for our video game free-play event, hosted by Massachusetts eSport and gaming venue, One Up Games! Explore virtual worlds with the Oculus Quest, or play the latest titles on Xbox Series S, PlayStation 4, and Nintendo Switch!

Please note: This event is for people ages 8 and older.

Tuesday, May 27

LITTLE GROOVE MUSIC FOR LITTLE ONES
TUESDAY, MAY 27 10:30—11:15 AM
Side Lawn Amesbury Public Library 149
Main St., Amesbury, MA, 01913
Little Groove Music for Little Ones

Best for ages 14 months - 4 years old (and their caregivers!)

Join Little Groove Music for a fun music class in our outdoor programming space. You'll be moving and grooving, dancing and swaying as little ones sing and jam out. Bring a blanket to sit on and have some fun!

This program is outdoors and subject to

change with the weather!

No registration required.

Thank you to Amesbury Youth Funding for funding this program

No pets, only service animals are welcome at our programs

Free No Registration Required

Thursday, May 29

IMAGINE THAT! (AGES 2-5)
THURSDAY, MAY 29 1:00—1:45 PM
Garden Room Nevins Library 305 Broadway, Methuen, MA, 01844
Imagine That! (Ages 2-5)

Bring your kids to enjoy stories and lots of imaginative play — a fun program that fosters creativity and collaboration!

If your plans change after you register and you won't be able to come to the program, please have the courtesy to cancel your registration so that children on the waiting list can take your place. You can find a link to cancel your plans on your registration confirmation email, or you can call us at 978-686-4080 x26.

Saturday, May 31

CREATE YOUR OWN ART BOOK! (TEENS)
SATURDAY, MAY 31 2:00—4:00 PM

Johnson Auditorium Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830
Create your own artist book in this class from bookbinding expert Lisa Hersey! You will create a flag book with an enclosure band. A flag book is a variation of an accordion fold with extra "pages" stick-

ing out. This is a great book structure to make at home: minimal effort & maximum effect. These books are great for a short poem, a mosaic of a landscape, or a collage of photographs. You are encouraged to brainstorm an idea or two for what you want your book to be about before class so we can dive right into work! Materials and tools for binding are provided. Each participant will leave with a one of a kind artist book!

Learn more about Lisa on her website.

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Haverhill Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Registration for this event opens Thursday, May 1 at 9:00 AM

Please send any events you would like considered for the Calendar of Events to Editor@merrimackvalleyparent.com



Don't Miss Our Summer Camps & Schools Section

In the February - June Issues

To Advertise Contact:
Mike@merrimackvalleyparent.com