

Merrimack Valley

April 2026

Parent

Miss Cathy's
Book Reviews

Raising
Grateful
Children

Summer
Camps &
Schools

Free

www.merrimackvalleyparent.com

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Parent

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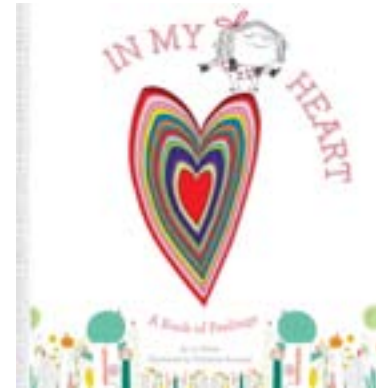
Visit: campwachusett.com for more information

Miss Cathy's

 I LOVE BOOKS

Children's Book Reviews

By Cathy A. Morrow



Spring is finally here! Just as the seasons change throughout our lives, so too do other things. Among the things that change are the feelings that we have and share with others. Whether our hearts are happy or sad, excited or upset, just like the seasons, our hearts and our moods change. This month I am sharing two books that demonstrate all those changes we experience, regardless of our age.

GOODBYE WINTER, HELLO SPRING

Written and Illustrated by
Kenard Pak
Goodwin Book, Henry Holt and
Company, Publishers
Best for Ages 3 and up

A young boy and his dog travel together. They witness all the wonders around them with awe. As they journey they greet each presence they encounter. "Hello, snow." ... The snow answers him: "Hello. From high up in the sky." "Good morn-ing, orange-soaked hills." ... "Good morning! We glow at dawn." The season gradually changes from winter to spring with it's rebirth. "Hello, budding flowers." ... The new flowers answer: "Hello! Our petals blossom."

This is a simple story that helps make us aware of so many things around us that happen in nature. Illustrations are gentle watercolor and pencil that depict the whimsical feeling of the boy's excursion.

Terry Teddy and I give this book -- -- three paws up



IN MY HEART~A BOOK ABOUT FEELINGS

Written by Jo Witek
Illustrations by Christine Roussey
Abrams Applesseed, an Imprint of
Abrams, Publishers
[Originally published by de La Martiniere, A Division of La Martiniere Groups, Paris]
Best for Ages 2 and up

A sweet little girl talks about all of the different characteristics of her heart. She experiences so many distinctive feelings and compares them to familiar objects. She states that her heart is like a house with so many feelings living inside of it. Sometimes her heart is like a bright shining star, this is when she is happy. When she is angry, it feels like her heart is going to explode. There are times when her heart is like a big elephant, it feels heavy. This is when she feels sad.

Fortunate-ly, there are other times when her heart is full of giggles, when she is silly.

This is a charming book, filled with adorable and funny illustrations. This book is also a useful book for children. It just might help them to understand and express how their heart is feeling to other children and adults in their lives

Terry Teddy and I give this book -- -- four paws up.



These books were generously provided by
Jabberwocky Bookshop, Newburyport
Jabberwockybookshop.com

Raising Grateful Children in an Entitled World

By Maria Luisa Salcines



I want... I want... I want... We've all heard it. Children naturally want what they see, what their friends have, and whatever sparks their imagination in the moment. And wanting is not the problem. In fact, it's perfectly normal. The problem begins when we give them everything they ask for.

Young children do not know how to set limits for themselves. That's our job.

Take them to a store, and they want half the shelves. Ask them to go to bed, and suddenly they're not tired. Leave them alone with a bag of cookies, and they may eat until they feel sick. Children rely on their parents to provide boundaries. It is through those boundaries that they eventually learn self-control.

Children also learn by watching us. If we tell them not to drink excessively, but Dad sits in front of the television during a football game with a six-pack of beer, the message becomes confusing. If we explain the importance of saving money while Mom comes home each week with a new pair of shoes, we undermine our own lesson. Values are not taught through lectures; they are modeled through daily behavior.

In many households, demanding schedules and constant distractions have reduced meaningful family time. As a result, some parents attempt to compensate for their absence by giving gifts, being lenient, or imposing fewer rules.

This dynamic can become even more pronounced in divorced families, where guilt sometimes leads parents to relax boundaries or say "yes" when they know they should say "no." But giving in does not build love or respect. In fact, it can have the opposite effect.

Children who grow up believing that everything will be handed to them often struggle as adults. The real world does not operate on entitlement.

Employers, relationships, and life itself require effort, patience, and resilience. When young people are unprepared for this reality, disappointment can turn into frustration, and even unhappiness.

True happiness is not found in possessions. It does not come from the brand of clothing we wear, the car we drive, or the size of our home. It grows from gratitude, purpose, relationships, and inner peace.

As parents, our responsibility is not to provide everything our children want. It is to prepare them for life. We do that by setting limits, modeling discipline, teaching gratitude, and helping them understand that happiness comes from within.

Raising responsible children means allowing them to experience effort, accountability, and even disappointment. It means teaching them that

privileges are earned, commitments matter, and their choices have consequences.

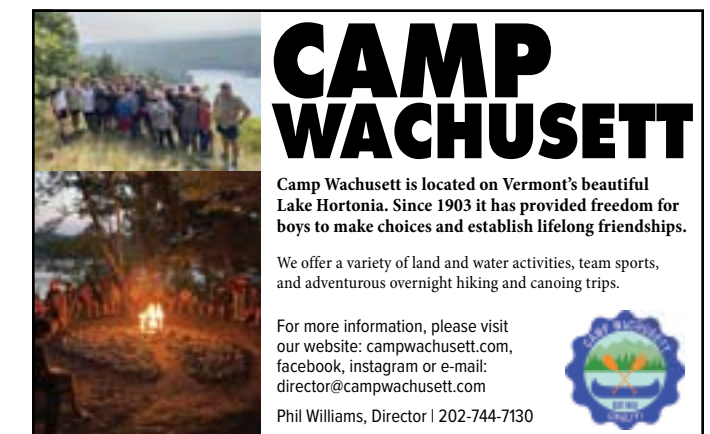
When children learn responsibility early, they grow into adults who are dependable, resilient, and confident in navigating life's challenges.

Grateful children recognize that what they have is a gift, not an entitlement. They learn to appreciate hard work — their own and others'. Gratitude shapes character. It builds humility, strengthens relationships, and protects them from the constant dissatisfaction that comes from always wanting more.

When we give children everything, we may win the moment, but children lose in the long run. When we teach them values, we give them something far greater, a foundation for a fulfilling life.

Because one day, they will stand on their own. And what will sustain them will not be what we bought for them, but what we built within them.

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*. Her books, *You Can Do It*, *Chickadee*, and *You Can Do It, Tex*, are award-winning children's books about depression and anxiety. Follow her on Instagram at @mlsalcinespoweroffamily and @youcandoitbooks, or contact her on her website, FamilyLifeAndFinding-Happy.com.



CAMP WACHUSETT

Camp Wachusett is located on Vermont's beautiful Lake Horton. Since 1903 it has provided freedom for boys to make choices and establish lifelong friendships.

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For more information, please visit our website: campwachusett.com, facebook, instagram or e-mail: director@campwachusett.com

Phil Williams, Director | 202-744-7130

April



Wednesday, April 1 D&D 101

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1 3:00—4:45 PM Program Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950
This program is for Tweens & Teens in grades 5-12 who are interested in Dungeons and Dragons. Doors open at 3 but feel free to come by anytime afterwards. Are you a new player who wants to join our library campaign? Do you just want to learn about the world's most popular roleplaying game?? Or, do you just need a place to hangout and play D&D with your friends??? D&D 101 is here to help! These sessions are held on the first Wednesday of every month.

If you would like to know about all future D&D programs at the library, you can sign up for our mailing list

TINY ART DROP OFF DEADLINE!

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1 ALL DAY Amesbury Public Library 149 Main St., Amesbury, MA, All Ages!

Drop off ends today for our Tiny Art show featuring clay sculptures from you! So if you picked up a kit or made one at home it's time to bring it in! We have an entry form for you to fill out and then it will be on display for the month of April. You can pick it up after if you'd like!

Questions? Contact us at 978-388-8148 x4 or ys@amesburylibrary.org

Free

No Registration Required

Thursday, April 2

D&D: ROAMING REALMS (GRADES 7-12)
THURSDAY, APRIL 2 3:30—4:45 PM Program Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950
For Grades 7-12. This program is registration only. Space is limited so register right away! This D&D club is for new players as well as experienced ones. We are using the D&D 5e system.

Join the adventure guild and explore the Roaming Realms! Did you murder Dorian Heartwood? Maybe, but probably not with the list of other suspects involved. It's up to you to figure out who did it and clear your names!

To play all you need is a level 6 character. Premade character sheets will be provided. As we will not have time to make character sheets at the start of sessions, you will need to attend a D&D 101 if you need help making your own character sheet. If you cannot attend this game but would

like to know about all future D&D programs at the library, you can sign up for our mailing list.

BOARD GAME GROUP: 3RD - 5TH GRADERS

THURSDAY, APRIL 23:30—4:45 PM Amesbury Room Amesbury Public Library 149 Main St., Amesbury, MA, 01913

Ages: 3rd - 5th (younger siblings welcome)
Come by the library for an informal time to play board games with your peers! We'll have board games and some weeks present a new one that you might not have heard of to play!

Registration is required for each week as space is limited in the Amesbury Room. Questions? Contact ys@amesburylibrary.org or 978-388-8148 x4

Saturday, April 4 CRAFT BUFFET

SATURDAY, APRIL 4 1:00—4:00 PM Children's Activity Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 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, April 6 TINY ART SHOW

MONDAY, APRIL 6 ALL DAY Amesbury Room Amesbury Public Library 149 Main St., Amesbury, MA, 01913

Come by to see the Tiny Art Show! Community members have dropped off their tiny creations and you get to admire them on display!

This show will be up in the Amesbury Room for the month of April
Free
No Registration Required

MOTHER GOOSE ON THE LOOSE (AGES 0-3)

MONDAY, APRIL 6 10:00—10:30 AM Cavallo Room Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830

Mother Goose on the Loose is an early literacy program that uses rhymes and songs to help pre-reading children get ready for reading. It incorporates music, movement, ritual, repetition, positive reinforcement, developmental tips, nursery rhymes, puppets, musical instruments, colored scarves, and book reading into a

fun-filled 30 minute program for newborns to 3 year olds and caregivers (older siblings also welcome).

To learn more about Mother Goose on the Loose, check out the official website. Registration Required. Late arrivals beyond 10 minutes will not be admitted.

Tuesday, April 7

COOKIES & COLORING

TUESDAY, APRIL 7 3:00—4:30 PM Children's Activity Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950
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

LEGO LINK-UP

TUESDAY, APRIL 7 4:00—5:00 PM Cavallo Room Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830

"Link-up" with other LEGO lovers and let your creativity flow! Spend the hour creating a LEGO masterpiece!
Recommended for ages 4-11.
No Registration Required!

Wednesday, April 8

HALF-DAY HANGOUT (TEENS)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8 1:00—3:00 PM Johnson Auditorium Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830

Come hang out, play games, and enjoy snacks!
Ages 11-18
No Registration Required

STONE CREATIONS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8 2:00—3:00 PM Cavallo Room Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830

Unleash your creativity and let your artistic talents shine with our DIY Stepping Stone program!

This hands-on, fun-filled program offers a fantastic opportunity for them to create their own personalized garden stepping stones.

Recommended for ages 8-14

Registration Required

Late arrivals beyond 10 minutes will not be admitted

Thursday, April 9

POMPOM PETS

THURSDAY, APRIL 9 4:00—5:00 PM Cavallo Room Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830

Make your own fluffy yarn pets to love and care for out of handmade pompoms! Choose from a few provided templates, or make something entirely your own; the choice is yours!
For ages 6 - 11
Registration required.

Late arrivals beyond 10 minutes will not be permitted.

Saturday, April 11

SUPER SMASH BROS. ULTIMATE TOURNAMENT

SATURDAY, APRIL 11 1:00—4:00 PM Program Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950

For tweens & teens in grades 4-12. One Up Games is back with another Super Smash Bros. Ultimate tournament! Up to 30 teens can participate. There will be prizes given out to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners. All controllers and gaming consoles will be provided thanks to One Up Games. Registration is requested, drop-ins welcome.

SUPERHERO STORYTIME

SATURDAY, APRIL 11 11:00 AM—12:00 PM Cavallo Room Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830

Come to storytime dressed as your favorite superhero. Storytime to be followed by superhero training, where you will run obstacle courses and face challenges proving you're ready to be a superhero!

For ages 3 - 6
Registration required

Monday, April 13

DIY SUNCATCHER

MONDAY, APRIL 13 4:00—5:00 PM Cavallo Room Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830

Be creative while making your own sun-catcher.
For ages 5 - 9.
Registration required.

Registration for this event opens Wednesday, April 1 at 8:00 AM.

Tuesday, April 14

POKEMON CLUB!

TUESDAY, APRIL 14 3:00—4:30 PM Children's Activity Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA,

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, April 15

TEEN CRAFTERNON: 3D ANIMAL PORTRAITS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15 4:00—5:00 PM Cavallo Room Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830 Paint an animal portrait that POPs using egg cartons!

Ages 11-18
Registration for this event opens Wednesday, April 1 at 8:00 AM.

Thursday, April 16

MIDDLE GRADE BOOK CLUB (AGES 8-12)
THURSDAY, APRIL 16 3:30—4:30 PM Children's Activity Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA

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 eat snacks. On April 16th we'll meet to discuss "Front Desk" by Kelly Yang. Call the library or log

in to your MVLC account to request a copy of the book today!

"Mia Tang has a lot of secrets. Number 1: She lives in a motel, not a big house. Every day, while her immigrant parents clean the rooms, ten-year-old Mia manages the front desk of the Calivista Motel and tends to its guests. Number 2: Her parents hide immigrants. And if the mean motel owner, Mr. Yao, finds out they've been letting them stay in the empty rooms for free, the Tangs will be doomed.

Number 3: She wants to be a writer. But how can she when her mom thinks she should stick to math because English is not her first language?

It will take all of Mia's courage, kindness, and hard work to get through this year. Will she be able to hold on to her job, help the immigrants and guests, escape Mr. Yao, and go for her dreams?"

Registration is requested (so we can plan snacks accordingly!) 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.

AFTER SCHOOL ARCADE

THURSDAY, APRIL 16 4:00—5:00 PM Cavallo Room Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830

Ready, set, go! Stop at the library to play some games on the Nintendo Switch. It's a fun and friendly environment to make new

friends, test your skills, and enjoy some awesome games. Whether you're a pro or just starting, everyone's welcome to play!

For ages 6-11
No registration required

Friday, April 17

TWEEN & TEEN CRAFT PICKUP
FRIDAY, APRIL 17 ALL DAY Teen Area Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950

For Tweens & Teens
Stop by the teen loft between April 17-25 to get your craft! The craft this week...
Boba!

No Registration Required

Tuesday, April 21

CATS & DOGS BINGO!
TUESDAY, APRIL 21 ALL DAY Children's Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950

We've hidden cats and dogs from some of our favorite books all around the Children's Room— can you find them? Any time during our open hours from April 21-25, come by the children's desk and grab a bingo sheet. Cross off each character as you find it. When you complete a row, bring your sheet to the desk for a small prize. No Registration Required

CRAFT CORNER

TUESDAY, APRIL 21 2:30—4:00 PM Children's Activity Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA,

Join Miss Isa and make a simple craft. This program is open to kids of all ages and abilities. Drop in any time between 2:30 and 4:00 p.m.
No Registration Required

APRIL VACATION: GOING TO SPACE!

TUESDAY, APRIL 21 ALL DAY Kids' Area Amesbury Public Library 149 Main St., Amesbury, MA, 01913
Teen Loft Amesbury Public Library 149 Main St., Amesbury, MA, 01913
All School Ages!

This vacation week we'll have a rocket craft to do in the Library and test outside on our solar system course. We'll have a comet to create, a planet to design, and fuzzy moons! Some to take home and some to do in the Library

Teens will have a few things to just chill out and relax with mandalas and other calming activities!

These activities are available for whenever the library is open and don't require registration so just come on by!

If you have questions about the Youth Service programs please contact us at ys@amesburylibrary.org or 978-388-8148x4
No Registration Required

Wednesday, April 22

TINFOIL SCULPTURES

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22 2:30—4:00 PM Children's Activity Room Newburyport Public Library Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950



SPORTS AND LEADERSHIP SUMMER PROGRAM



Through purposeful play and skill development, students strengthen communication, responsibility, and resilience while learning the importance of sportsmanship, teamwork, and problem-solving.

THIS PROGRAM WILL RUN IN TWO ONE-WEEK SESSIONS

SESSION 1: JUNE 15 - JUNE 19
SESSION 2: JUNE 22 - JUNE 26
TIME: 8:30 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.





LEARN MORE
AND REGISTER!



Use simple supplies to make incredible artwork! This program focuses on process and imagination instead of the final project.

What will you make?

Kids of all ages and abilities welcome. Drop in any time between 2:30 and 4:00 p.m. to participate.

No Registration Required

EARTH DAY MOCHI

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22 2:00—3:00 PM
Cavallaro Room Haverhill Public Library 99
Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830

Celebrate Earth Day by making mochi that looks just like our planet! Mochi is a traditional Japanese rice cake made from sweet rice flour that is chewy and fun.

Ages 8-12

Registration required

Registration for this event opens Wednesday, April 8 at 8:00 AM.

Thursday, April 23

SEED BOMBS

THURSDAY, APRIL 23 2:30—4:00 PM Children's Activity Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, In celebration of Earth Day, we're making seed bombs! Drop in any time between 2:30 and 4:00 to make these simple items out of seeds and liquefied paper pulp. Later, toss them anywhere you want flowers to grow.

They don't take long to make, but the process can be messy, so consider wearing clothes you don't mind getting dirty! This program is open to kids of all ages and

abilities.

No Registration Required

MAKE A SEED BALL!

THURSDAY, APRIL 23 10:30—11:30 AM Side Lawn Amesbury Public Library 149 Main St., Amesbury, MA, 01913

All ages!

It's Earth Day Week! Let's create some seed balls from native seeds to spread these plants around our community. Everyone is welcome to come create some to take home! We have all the supplies and instructions that you'll need.

This program is dependent on weather as it is outdoors. Please dress accordingly. No registration is required and drop-in any time between 10:30am - noon.

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

Not pets, only service animals are welcome at our programs.

FREE

No Registration Required

SHRINKY FUN

THURSDAY, APRIL 23 2:00—3:00 PM Cavallaro Room Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830

From personalized keychains and colorful charms to fun decorations and keepsakes, Unleash your creativity in this fun and hands-on shrinky dink program.

All materials will be provided, and each child will leave with their one-of-a-kind masterpiece. Join us for a creative adven-

ture that's full of fun and surprises!

For ages 6-11

Registration Required

Late arrivals beyond 10 minutes will not be admitted

Registration for this event opens Thursday, April 9 at 8:00 AM.

Wednesday, April 28

LET'S BUILD!

TUESDAY, APRIL 28 3:00—4:30 PM Children's Activity Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950

Come play with a variety of building toys, including magnetic tiles and straws & connectors. Kids of all ages and abilities are welcome, but please take note that some of these building toys have small pieces. Drop in to our Activity Room any time between 3:00 and 4:30 p.m. to participate.

No Registration Required

Thursday, April 30

BOBA BINGO

THURSDAY, APRIL 30 3:30—4:45 PM Program Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950
For tweens & teens in grades 4-12.

Let's celebrate National Boba Day with some boba bingo, boba trivia, and some sweet treats! There will be prizes.

No Registration Required

EXPLORATION STORYTIME

(2 - 6 YEAR OLDS)

THURSDAY, APRIL 30 10:30—11:15 AM Side

Lawn Amesbury Public Library 149 Main St., Amesbury, MA, 01913
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, create, and learn!

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

Free

No Registration Required

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

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