



FAMILY CONNECTION

Hunterdon Region, School Age Edition | March 2023

YMCA OF BUCKS AND HUNTERDON COUNTIES

Hello Friends!

This month's Family Connection celebrates one of our favorite times of the school year: **Read Across America!** Read Across America begins March 2, chosen because it is the birthday of Dr. Seuss (Theodore Geisel), one of our most treasured children's authors. Read Across America invites all of us to engage our children in reading. As children and adults everywhere become more focused and distracted by smart devices and social media, it is more important now than ever for families to take the time to read books and stories together. Our teachers and child care providers across the Y are always excited to share the joys of reading with children in our programs, so in March, we hope to make an even more indelible impression.

What are you enjoying reading with your children at home? Discovered anything new and exciting at your local library? What are your family's reading routines? Please share with us, and we will publish your stories and experiences with the community so we all may benefit from your reading success! Please reach out to Michael at mreisman@ymcabhc.org for more information, and to share with the Y community. You can also learn more about National Read Across America month at National Today's website [here!](#)*

Family Connection Guide

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Reminders

- Baby it's cold outside! As we go outside every day, please be sure your children arrive each day in weather-appropriate outdoor wear and shoes labeled with their names. Be sure your child has an extra set of clothes at school. Thank you!
- Directors will be sending communication out to families regarding weather closures, so please be on the lookout for that information.

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Program highlight

White House School, 5-A-Day

Students at the White House School learned and demonstrated understanding of healthy eating through 5-a-day. "5-a-day is three servings of vegetables and two servings of fruit," said Katie and Alexa. "A serving is the size of your fist. Hope you make good choices!"



Staff spotlight

Elizabeth Palladino, Tewksbury

Liz began working for the Y in 1992 and has been working with children for 20 years. Outside of the Y, Liz taught Pre-K (specifically art, science, nature) at a private school for 11 years. Within our Y, she has worked at our Milford Preschool, taught preschool and school age gymnastics and art, worked before and after care in SACC, arts & crafts at Camp Carr, coordinated birthday parties, and helped run family events. During the pandemic school closures, Liz was a site director for the Round Valley branch full day SACC virtual learning program, guiding kindergarten through middle school age students through their online learning routines and recreational downtime. Liz loves how school age children are very hands on in their learning. They can navigate through different activities like art, experiments, and construction with the idea that there's not just one right answer. They can imitate or be original. That makes for lots of fun activities! Liz enjoys hiking with her dog and her favorite color is orange.

Important Reminders and Upcoming Events



Important Announcement about Camp!

YMCA of Bucks and Hunterdon Counties summer camp programs are enrolling at a very fast pace. If you have not already registered and secured spots and weeks for your children at our celebrated camps for 2023, the time is now. Have questions? Ready to sign up? Please click [here](#) to see our locations and click through for pricing and registration information. Can't wait to see your children at camp!



March is Full of Family Fun at the Y!

- March 3, 6-7 PM | Family Dodgeball, Doylestown branch
 - March 3, 6-9 PM | Preteen Night, Doylestown branch
 - March 3, 5-8 PM | Parent's Night Out, Fairless Hills and Quakertown branches
 - March 10, 6-7 PM | March Madness Hoops Fest, Deer Path branch
 - March 10, 5:30-9 PM | Parent's Night Out, Doylestown branch
 - March 17, 6-7 PM | Leprechaun Games, Fairless Hills branch
 - March 17, 6-8 PM | Parent's Night Out, Deer Path branch
 - March 24, 6-7 PM | Family Glow Dance Party, Quakertown branch
 - March 24, 6:15-7:30 PM | Canvas Painting Workshop, Quakertown branch
 - March 24, 5:30-9 PM | Parent's Night Out, Doylestown branch
 - April 1, 11 AM-2 PM | Metro Esports: uCreate Snake Game, Doylestown branch
 - April 6, 8 AM-5 PM | Metro Esports: uCreate Meteor Blaster Game, Doylestown branch
 - Every Friday, 6-8 PM, Metro Esports Gaming Lounge in Doylestown holds open tournaments!
- For more information about any of these events, please click [here](#).

Text message alerts

Click [here](#) to sign up to receive text messages from your child care team including potential delayed openings or closings. By completing this form, you are providing consent for YMCA of Bucks and Hunterdon Counties to send text messages to your phone.

We're Hiring!

YMCA of Bucks and Hunterdon Counties is looking for great people to join our staff teams! Part time and full time [opportunities](#) are available in Bucks and Hunterdon locations!

Looking to Learn More About Y Programs for the Family?

Visit [here](#) for a full list of branch-specific program guides. Have you tried the program activity tool? Have an activity or class in mind for you or someone in your family? Check out our online [Activity Finder](#) to help you find exactly what you are looking for.

More fun with books!

Sometimes we need to go an extra mile to interest our children in books and reading. Oftentimes, associating a fun, hands-on activity with reading can make it more enticing. A classic example of this is with **Dr. Seuss's Green Eggs and Ham**. Not only are his rhymes belly-laughable, but you can MAKE green eggs and ham in your house, on your boat, on a train, or with a goat! A little blue food coloring will tint your scrambled eggs green. Try it! And speaking of Dr. Seuss, you can celebrate his birthday with traditional treats and a big family reading of some of his more hilarious tongue-twisters like Fox In Socks or Oh Say Can You Say! Here's even more suggestions to engage your child(ren) in the joy of books:

- **Fun foods:** Many children's books feature food relevant to the story. Incorporate those foods into your reading experience! Stone Soup, Bagels for Benny, and Green Eggs and Ham (above), just to name a few.
- **Picture Books:** Great for our youngest learners. Goodnight Gorilla, or anything by David Wiesner, allow children to point at the pages and say what they see. Older readers can help by doing the same. The story becomes the sum of what the children noticed and said, regardless of the adult's interpretation of the author's intent.
- **Retelling through art:** Read a story with your child, then invite them to share their thoughts and feelings about the story in an expressive medium: drawing or painting a picture; forming a memorable character or artifact with playdough or model magic; recording your child's interpretive summary into your phone and watching/listening together; and making sock puppets are all great ways to put hands on the reading experience.
- **Rewrite the ending:** Children of any age may want to send the story in a new direction. Partner with them to re-create the story arc or resolution through various media. Smartphones make great audio/video recording devices, and kids love to see themselves on them!

March is also Women's History Month!

Women's History Month is a dedicated month to reflect on the often-overlooked contributions of women to United States history. Did you know that Women's History Month developed out of a weeklong celebration of women's contributions by a school district (teachers! Imagine that) in Sonoma, CA in 1978? Learn more about Women's History Month at [this](#) history.com page.*

Looking for book recommendations for your family?

One of the best resources you have are children and their teachers! What are they reading in class? What stories have excited them? Another great resource is your local library. Many libraries feature fun and engaging children's sections and family reading centers, as well as children's book kits featuring the book, a CD reading of the book, and puppets representing the characters! An online search shows a number of local lending libraries throughout Bucks County [here](#), and Hunterdon County [here](#). Amazon can be searched for popular titles as well. [Here](#) is a link where you will find the most popular children's books being sold on their site, for children of all ages. These are great resources to find age appropriate books for your family. **We recommend using the lists for reference, then seeing what's in stock at your local, family-owned bookshop.** Take a family trip to a local bookstore or library, and allow the time for your child to dive into all the wonder on those shelves.