



Highlights from the Fox Valley Park District 's MyTime Family Fun and Fitness Night at The Vaughan Center. Above: FVPD raffle winners, the Ortiz family



WAYS TO RAISE INDEPENDENT CHILDREN

When children are born, it's the job of parents to protect them in every way they can. Once they reach elementary school, however, they become more capable and are able to do lots of things for themselves. Unfortunately, many parents still try to protect their children from everything. And all of that well-intended "protection" can smother their children's budding independence. Overprotective parenting makes it difficult for children to learn essential skills for success in school and life—such as communication, negotiation, perseverance, responsibility and decision making. To avoid the many pitfalls of overprotective parenting:

1. Don't do everything for your child. Let him do things for himself. Will he make mistakes? Probably. But he will learn from those mistakes.
2. Don't drop everything to rescue your child when he forgets things. If he leaves his homework or gym shoes at home, don't rush them up to the school. Instead, let him face the consequences.
3. Don't try to negotiate a better grade for your child. If you or your child are confused about a grade he receives, let your child talk to the teacher about it first.
4. Don't call the parent of a child your child is complaining about in school. Give your child a chance to work it out. However, if it is a serious problem, contact the school immediately.

To thrive, kids need to trust in their own capabilities while, at the same time, knowing that they can handle it if they aren't successful at something. It's by experiencing mastery and rebounding from failure that they develop healthy self-confidence. Here are several ways you can set kids up to feel capable and get the most out of their skills and talents.

1. Allow kids to fail. It's natural to want to protect your child from failure, but trial and error is how kids learn, and falling short on a goal helps kids find out that it's not the end of the world. It can also spur kids to greater effort, which will serve them well as adults.
2. Praise perseverance. Learning not to give up at the first frustration or bail after one setback is an important life skill. Confidence and self-esteem are not about succeeding at everything all the time, they're about being resilient enough to keep trying, and not being distressed if you're not the best.
3. Celebrate effort. Praising kids for their accomplishments is great, but it's also important to let them know you're proud of their efforts regardless of the outcome. It takes hard work to develop new skills, and results aren't always immediate. Let kids know you value the work they're doing, whether they're toddlers building with blocks or teenagers teaching themselves to play the guitar.
4. Expect them to pitch in. They might complain, but kids feel more connected and valued when they're counted on to do age-appropriate jobs, from picking up toys to doing dishes to picking up younger siblings from a play date. Homework and after-school activities are great, but being needed by your family is invaluable.
5. Embrace imperfection. As grown-ups we know perfection is unrealistic, and it's important for kids to get that message as early as possible. Help kids see that whether it's on TV, in a magazine, or on a friend's social media feed, the idea that others are always happy, successful, and perfectly dressed is a fantasy, and a destructive one. Instead, remind them that being less than perfect is human and totally okay.



FREE AND LOW COST FAMILY EVENTS



Sports Saturdays continue until March 21st.

Free to resident families with children in grades 1 through 5, Sports Saturdays provide a supervised environment for children to interact and participate in activities that include sports, crafts and general fitness.

Grades 1-2: 9 a.m. to noon

Grades 3-5: Noon to 3 p.m.

Dates: March 7, 14, 21

School Sites: District 129: Hall, McCleery & Schneider Schools. District 131: Gates, Hermes & O'Donnell Schools.



Join the annual tradition of turning Maple sap into Maple Syrup.

Saturday, **March 21st**

Red Oak Nature Center

2343 S River St. Batavia, IL 60510

9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

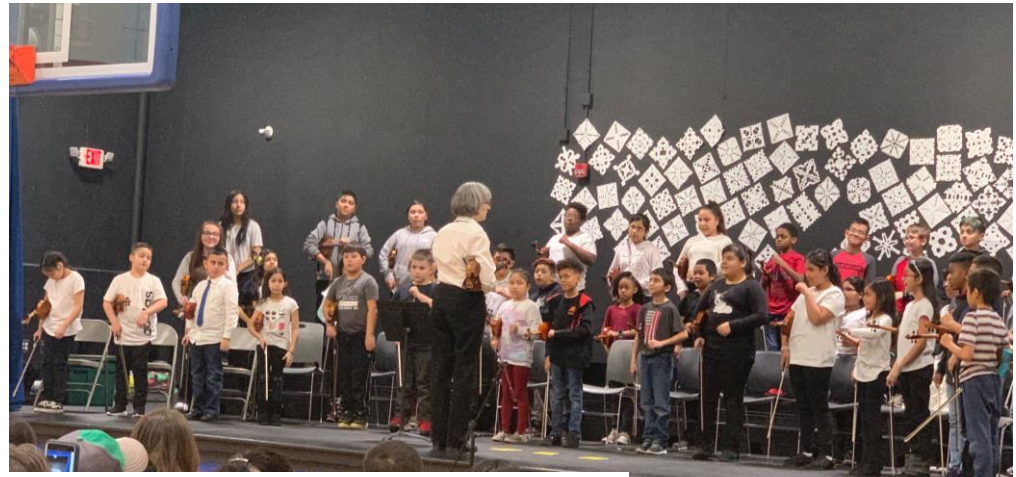
\$2 per person



More pool fun at The Vaughan Athletic Center



Staff from all nine MyTime sites were invited to participate in a service learning /team building event at Feed My Starving Children. They packaged meals which will help feed vulnerable children in other countries. Thanks to all of the caring staff who participated.



MYTIME HIGHLIGHTS

Above: Student performances during a mid-year concert at Hill Elementary School.

Left: Zumba time at Greenman Elementary School

