

A photograph of two young children walking away from the camera on a paved path. The child on the left is wearing a mustard yellow sweater and dark pants, carrying a backpack. The child on the right is wearing a brown hoodie, blue jeans, and a grey beanie. The path leads towards a stone archway in the distance, flanked by trees with vibrant autumn foliage in shades of orange, yellow, and red. The overall atmosphere is warm and scenic.

Parents

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Fall 2020
September, October, November

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Published By
Hill Country Pubs - Multi Media
210-226-7536

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Fall Gardening

by: Taylor Abrahamsen

2020 has been quite the combination of twists we did not see coming. As we revel in the decisions of safely working, living, and schooling, it can be hard to find time to center together as a family and pause the crisis mode each day carries. Allow this season of uncertainty to become one of growth as a family beginning the rewarding new hobby of **gardening**. Generations before us used to commonly have **gardens** in every yard, cultivating the land as a family out of necessity, and building bonds and character traits that we see the absence of becoming clearer today. We live such busy lives it is hard to think of finding joy in the repetitive tasks of tending land and a **garden**. But perhaps the vital component many of us are missing comes from the sense of self sufficiency and accomplishment growing something together that brings literal fruit.



Gardening as a family can be done in so many formats catered to fit your space, no matter big or small. Containers, raised beds, direct sowing, and even pallet **gardening**, options abound make it easy to find the method best for your space and schedule. One gift with the Texas heat, you can **garden** in almost any season. With so many options to consider it is the perfect time to start a new fruitful hobby with your family!

Containers provide a perfect option if you have a small amount of space. Most **garden** plants can be grown in pots between 6-24 inches offering a variety of fall vegetables and flowers to grow.

The mobility of containers also provides additional benefits with the heat and cool snaps we often get in Texas. Raised beds are one of the most popular forms of **gardening**, offering the benefits of a larger space, with the benefits of creating fertile soil without disturbing the ground below. Raised beds can be built to customized sizes, perfect for little helpers. Traditional row farming, or direct sowing, offers many benefits and higher yield, but requires substantially more space. Consider even fun styles of **gardening** the kids can help create and enjoy like pallets, bean tee pees, upcycled tires and drawers, just to name a few. Create a fun project and engagement together before the first seeds are even planted.

It can seem a bit daunting when thinking of tackling **gardening**, as the saying goes however, many hands make light work. Family time together focused on a shared task with literally edible rewards. Quite a beautiful way to invest in our family relationships. Children, no matter the age, begin to understand the life cycle of our food source when **gardening**. Picky eaters may be more willing to eat peas you grow as a family. Even for adults, this can be such a humbling lesson. Life in 2020 has been filled with so much anxiety, having the ability to step back from it and enjoy the simple task of tending to growing life really can bring peaceful thoughts. Psychiatrists have noted the therapeutic beneficial tools of plants serving to lower anxiety, depression, ADD, and eating disorders.

Growing a **garden** also teaches children responsibility, ownership, patience, and how to learn from mistakes. We spend so much time virtually now, children are missing out on the previous opportunities of sports and social interaction where these skills are honed. Gain back this part of life together while gaining such beneficial lifelong skills. **Gardening** together also serves as a great workout! Getting full body movement and daily exercise provide better mental and physical health for the entire family.

Fall provides a perfect opportunity to begin, as the temperature gradually levels lower its easier to tolerate time outside, and vegetable and perennials grow beautifully in the fall Texas sunshine. Consider growing what you know your family will enjoy. Succession plant to have your favorite veggies all season! Luckily if you eat a lot of vegetables many grow better in the fall with less pressure from heat waves and pests. Think of the joy it would bring to visit your yard **garden** to pick some okra, zucchini, and tomatoes to grill tonight.

Knowing the zone and what grows best are an instrumental part of being a successful **gardener**. Be mindful before planting to ensure your **garden** has the best chance of harvest. Fall Vegetables that grow well in Texas: **Broccoli, Cauliflower, Lavender, Cucumber, Okra, Peas, Peppers, Pumpkin, Melons, Tomatoes & Squash**

These veggies love the fall Texas weather and will grow until temperatures drop into freezing. Think of the fun of growing your own pumpkin patch this year and carving homegrown pumpkins together for Halloween. An important factor to be sure and observe before planting is sunlight. There is less light in the later duration of fall which may impact growth as the plant matures. Consider checking your average daily sunlight to ensure you plant early enough in the year to have at least 10 hours each day at the end of your plants maturing time. That being said, not all plants require full sun, research the options you would like to plant easily to see how much sun they require. Just as important, check the area where you plan to have your plants checking how much direct sunlight the area gets each day. This can be a great first project for the kids to track each hour noting the amount of sun the area is exposed to, then intentionally grow plants that have a similar requirement for light.

Taking the time to be intentional before the start will help bring about the best results and keep your family invested in growing in your new hobby together.



Investing as a family into learning together brings bonding few other tasks deliver, a blessing to everyone in the family. Author of over 20 **gardening** books, Jenny Hendy, speaks in her award winning book "**Kids First Gardening Book**" about the true internal values **gardening** brings, "it teaches boys and girls to nurture things." Often it can feel like a struggle to recognize the importance of caring for things in great detail, but with **gardening**, one finds themselves paying attention to each detail valuing the smallest of victories with true joy. Sharing in that together as a family creates a bond of learning together. It has been proven that boys respond best to conversation and are more open when working next to one another on shared tasks. Cultivate that with your family this fall. Consider tackling fun projects together building a bean tee pee with lights for fun nights outside, build a web with thick twine or wire and grow pumpkin vines up the web, even make a sunflower wall of beautiful flowers to watch sway in the fall breeze. There are a lot of factors we cannot control in 2020, but we can determine where our focus nears. Bring your attention as a family to nature, literally growing together, giving such a gift in this season of uncertainty to every member of your tribe.

things to do ... places to go

The Drive In at Fiesta Texas - A Contact Free Cinema Experience

Say hello to The Drive-In at Fiesta Texas, a contactless cinema experience with the gorgeous La Cantera cliffs as a backdrop! This spot features the largest double-sided drive-in screen in the U.S. – perfect for movie nights in the age of social distancing. We believe that all experiences should be memorable, which is why we are on a mission to transform nights at the movies to cinematic events like no other. You bring your friends and loved ones, and we'll bring you city skylines, sunsets, starlit evenings, awesome drinks, delicious food, and great movies on the big screen.

Wild Connections Lego Exhibit at The San Antonio Zoo through Dec 31

San Antonio Zoo wants you to reconnect with wildlife and nature through our upcoming exhibition of art sculptures made completely with LEGO® bricks by acclaimed artist Sean Kenney. The whole family will marvel at gravity-defying and astoundingly precise structures of some of your favorite animals!

Halloween Spooktacular at Seaworld San Antonio - Sept 18 - Nov 1

During this family-friendly daytime seasonal event, kids are encouraged to wear their favorite Halloween-themed costumes and enjoy Halloween-themed attractions and shows, the Sesame Street Halloween Parade, then interact with colorfully costumed characters as they trick-or-treat throughout SeaWorld's Bay of Play area.

Zoo Boo at The San Antonio Zoo Sept 19 - Oct 31

The San Antonio Zoo once again hosts this family-friendly, non-spooky Halloween celebration held every weekend day September-October. The zoo will be decked out with Halloween fun complete with trick-or-treat stations, pumpkin painting, dance parties, costume contests, a hay maze, a hay slide and plenty of games. Families can even enjoy a ride on the Zoo Boo! Express. Little ghouls and goblins are encouraged to wear their best costume for a chance to be in a costume contest.

places to go

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Education Takes a New Direction in 2020

by: Taylor Abrahamsen

Waiting with anticipation, that first day of school always seemed filled with excitement, nerves, and hopefully the perfect outfit. In the season of abnormality that is 2020, our children are having quite a different experience returning to the classroom, if they are at all.

Instead of reuniting after a summer away with hugs and connection, our children are welcomed back with waves, behind masked smiles. Our teachers are doing everything possible to make the best out of a bad situation, and are excelling at creating the best balance between safety and normality, but many parents are asking if it's worth the anxiety brought on with every changing policy, to return to the classroom or seek an alternative.



After seeing the way spring schooling was conducted many parents are beginning to question if the state is providing the best education for their children, or just taking up time with ineffective methods, and ideological teachings. We all know it was a fast transition, but after conducting perhaps the first mass observations of our children's classes for weeks in the spring many see the need for improvements. In addition to the education itself, safety seems to be quite the top concern. With 65% of Texans polled earlier this summer by the University of Texas and

Texas Politics Project feeling its unsafe for children to return to school. Enter the surge of alternative education options.

Prior to the pandemic, about 2.5 million children were homeschooled in America in grades K-12, that number has sky rocketed for 2020. Brian Ray, President of the National Home Educators Research Institute, anticipates 10% or more of our children will be home schooled this year. With such a large transition out of the traditional classroom a lot of parents are seeking alternatives that offer social and educational connection. Bubble schooling, pandemic pods, pod groups, or home school co-ops, no matter the name, have become the "it" thing this school year. Offering relief to parents and enjoyment to children seeking normality and enjoying seeing their friend's full faces.



Local and state governments continue to show fluidity in how the school year will be conducted. This has opened the door for parents seeking consistencies that can be found in collaborative schooling outside of the bureaucracy. It is quite interesting to see the paradigm shift occurring in front of us when it comes to the view of children educated at home. Several years ago,

homeschooled kids were seen to be potentially socially awkward, perhaps not rounded in education, and now the truth is coming to light of the freedoms schooling at home can allow. Think of the potential to get more out of each day for our children. The pandemic may be the spark but this transition moving towards more micro-education groups may become a consistent part of our culture. The benefits are not just for the student, but teachers as well. Teachers are no longer lecturing just in brick and mortar. They are able to educate children outside the standardized testing model and focus on the individual. This even is creating competition for viable positions with less students, and more creativity, challenging teachers to constantly grow in their skills.



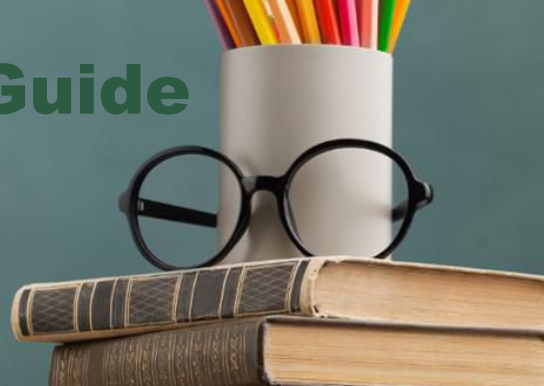
These homeschooling groups allow the options for lower-risk exposure for everyone involved, as well as social connection with peers, and shared resources for parents. Coming together in collaborative groups makes the process possible for many who cannot afford to stay home or hire out an educator. Free and low-cost websites like outschool.com and countless more make it possible to keep costs low and children learning together. They also have so many more class options than the schools do, expanding on interests to gain new skills often included in the same cost.



All across Facebook, Nextdoor, and countless other platforms parents are seeking alternative options, trying to educate themselves on what will be best for their families. Many groups forming may not be neighbors, but share the goal for safe education bringing together communities far and wide. The surge of interest into these group pods has rekindled something we have lost a bit with the internet, the need for community.

As we experienced the pandemic focus has shifted from a short sprint of '15 days to slow the spread', to the marathon of understanding this is our reality for a while. The need for relationships has become center stage. Relationships at home, and with our community. Many are feeling the call to take ownership of our children's education. Familial connections have been strengthened in this season, leaving the desire to continue building on that depth. Many entering the space of homeschooling are finding hope in parents of those 2.5 million pre-pandemic homeschoolers to show them the ropes, recommend best practices, and seek kinship in navigating the role of educator. Sites like Home School Mom offer hundreds of tips for parents exiting the traditional school model and communities to connect with in areas all over the country. There are resources to help, and you are not alone. No matter the size of your pod, or the kinks along the way as you find your stride, coming together in collaboration for the safety of our children is a beautiful thing.

Education Guide 2020 - 2021



There is no doubt about it: our kids are the future. Finding the right educational facilities for our children can be difficult, stressful, and time consuming, so we went ahead and have selected our favorite primary, secondary, and specialty schools just for you!

PRESCHOOL AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS



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Education Guide

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7 Essential Skills for Achieving Academic Success

Sponsored by: BASIS Charter Schools

It's never too early for your child to start developing the skills needed for academic success. Even in elementary school, it's important for children to build a strong foundation in skills that will help them thrive in school and life.

Organization

Children need to be organized to succeed in school. Many academic challenges arise due to a lack of organization—desks become messy and homework gets lost, or students forget to write assignments down and don't complete them. To help with organization, make sure your child has a planner and that assignments are checked off daily by their teachers.

Time Management

Students should learn how to balance homework time with extracurricular activities so they can achieve their academic goals without becoming stressed when big assignments are due. One of the best ways for students to do this is by participating in extracurricular activities.

Study Skills

Students who develop good homework practices early on will have an advantage once their work load increases. They should have a clean, consistent work space free from any distractions, and a set amount of time dedicated to homework each night.

Critical Thinking

Students who learn critical thinking skills learn how to think, instead of what to think. Teachers who engage students in critical thinking will discuss texts in class, ask open-ended questions, and empower them to ask "why" and "what if."

Problem-Solving

When students acquire this skill, they will be able to face academic challenges and find solutions using new, creative methods. Outside the classroom, extracurricular activities like Science Olympiad, Speech & Debate, and Junior Robotics will help further develop these skills.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Connection projects enrich content learned in each subject, and give students the ability to see how skills from multiple courses can be combined to solve real-world problems, supplying them with an impressive breath of knowledge across academic disciplines.

Communication

It is important for students to learn how to communicate effectively in school—from giving class presentations, to actively listening and maintaining eye contact while others are speaking. When students are encouraged to collaborate on projects or reach a group consensus, they further develop their communication skills.

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Top 10 KIDS ACTIVITIES



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Top 10 KIDS ACTIVITIES

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Find each of the fall words hidden below.

WORDS TO FIND:

U M P K I N R
O W I D S A R

An illustration of autumn-themed items: a large orange pumpkin with a green stem, several yellow and orange leaves, and a brown acorn with a textured cap.



Health Care Choices

Children are our most precious resource, so we have compiled this list to help you find the best health care provider for your kids.

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| Location | Contact | Details |
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| A thru Z Pediatrics Multiple Locations | a-zpeds.com | A Thru Z Pediatrics takes pride in being a trusted name in the Local Community. Offering Comprehensive Children's Health Care Services and treatments |
| Almouie Pediatrics Multiple Locations | AlmouiePediatrics.com | Almouie Pediatrics is committed to the highest quality healthcare for infants, children and adolescents. Our trained professionals are devoted to assisting you in providing the best care through all stages of your child's life. |
| CentroMed Multiple Locations | CentroMedSA.com | CentroMed has a team of pediatricians and pediatric nurse practitioners trained to take care of children's healthcare needs. |
| Children's Dental Ark New Braunfels | 830-625-1234 ChildrensDentalArk.com | Our mission is to guide children through their dental experiences while providing comprehensive care in a friendly environment. |
| Children's Hospital of San Antonio 333 N. Santa Rosa | 210-704-2011 CHofSA.com | One of the best pediatric medical centers in the US, offering a complete range of health care services for children. |
| Christus Santa Rosa Hospital NB 600 N Union Ave. | 830-606-9111 ChristusHealth.org/Santa-Rosa/New-Braunfels | Our innovative and interdisciplinary team is committed to rapid diagnosis and treatment while delivering the best outcomes available for our pediatric and adult patients. Located in New Braunfels. |
| Cole Pediatric Therapy Multiple Locations | colehealth.com/ pediatric-therapy/ | Cole Pediatric Therapy has been serving Texas families since 2000, providing Speech, Occupational and Physical therapy to children of all ages and abilities. |
| Cute Smiles 4 Kids 823 Bandera Rd. | 210-435-3333 CuteSmiles4kidstx.com | Ranging from preventative to restorative dentistry, our office offers in-house conscious sedation and general anesthesia, providing a pain-free, comfortable, and fun experience for your children! |
| Elle Med Spa 620 W. San Antonio St., NB | 830-461-5252 ellemedspallc.com | Love, Beauty and Service Mobile services open for evenings. Beauty Parties (botox/dysport and or fillers) as an additional service. Please Call or Text Elle to discuss a visit time and date. |
| Epic Health Services 4502 Centerview Dr #150, SA | 210-377-3742 epichealthservices.com | Epic Health Services is a leading provider of pediatric skilled nursing, therapy, and autism services, as well as a spectrum of adult home health care services, including skilled nursing, therapy, personal care, and behavioral health nursing. |



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| Family First Chiropractic & Wellness 166 Comal Ave., NB | 830-625-5111 mayochiro.com | As a chiropractor who specializes in pediatric and pregnancy chiropractic care, Dr. Mayo knows the importance for the entire family to stay healthy. At Family First we provide personalized affordable family care plans. |
| New Braunfels Dental Ark 833 Landa St., NB | 830-629-7494 NewBraunfelsDentalArk.com | Having a great smile means different things to different people. We listen carefully so we can provide treatment that will achieve your goals. |
| MedPost Urgent Care Multiple Locations | medpost.com | Injuries and illnesses are unpredictable and inconvenient. That's why there's MedPost. We're open throughout the week with extended hours to provide you same-day treatment-- including weekends, evenings, and holidays. |
| North Central Baptist Hospital 520 Madison Oak Dr San Antonio | 210-297-4000 BaptistHealthSystem.com | North Central Baptist Hospital provides high quality care and is best known nationally for several services in particular such as, Surgical Specialties, Women's Health, Pediatric Care and Orthopedic Medicine. |
| Resolute Health Hospital 555 Creekside Crossing, NB | 830-500-6000 ResoluteHealth. | Since 2014, Resolute Health Hospital has been passionately committed to providing the San Antonio and New Braunfels communities with compassionate full-service medical care. |
| Texas Tykes Pediatric Dentistry 2163 Stephens Pl, Ste 106, NB | 830-302-2044 textastykespediatricdentistry.com | Our goal is to deliver the best possible dental care for infants, children, teens and kids with special healthcare needs. Our team will strive to make sure that your child has a positive experience. |
| University Health Multiple Locations | universityhealthsystem.com | University Health System is a nationally recognized teaching hospital and network of outpatient healthcare centers, owned by the people of Bexar County. |




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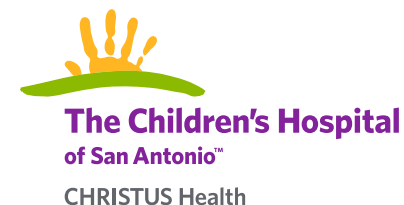


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210.455.0138 alamocitypopcorn.com

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6430 N. New Braunfels Ave., San Antonio
210.822.8222 bellesbeaux.com/

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21850 Bulverde Rd., #102., Helotes
210.994.8100
bricksandminifigs.com/sanantonio-tx/

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555 W. Bitters Rd, SA, 210.468.2845
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418 Villita, SA 210.207.8614
Facebook.Com/lavillitahistoricartsvillage

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514 W commerce, SA 210.207.8600
Getcreativesanantonio.Com/explore-san-antonio/market-square

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New Braunfels Farmers Market

186 S. Castell Ave., New Braunfels
830.629.2223 nbfarmersmarket.com/

We celebrate the fresh produce, meats, cheeses and other goodies that our local farmers have to offer. Our creative artisans have something for everyone, from fashionable hats and scarves, and jewelry, to creamy soaps and lotions and housewares. Bring the kids! Bring the dogs! Make a morning of it! There's great food for everyone and lively music from our local area entertainers. New Braunfels Farmers Market really is the best little festival in New Braunfels!

Nature's Treasures

4103 N i-35, Austin 512.472.5015
Ntrocks.Com

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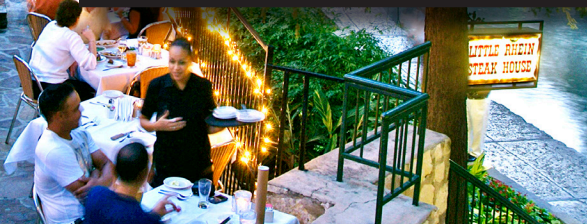
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