

SMOM'S FUN & INEXPENSIVE THINGS TO DO WITH KIDS!

Public Library

Visit the children's libraries in other towns. Most have toys, small tables, puzzles, etc. For links to other South Shore libraries, visit www.ocln.org/ocln_libraries.list.html. Select a library, review the upcoming story times, and then sign up...all online! FYI: Norwell's Library has great children's programs. Most libraries also offer discounted or free passes to many Boston-area attractions and museums, including the Boston Children's Museum, the Museum of Science, Plimoth Plantation, and the New England Aquarium.

McDonald's Playgrounds

The one on Rt. 18 in Weymouth is next to Bldg. 19 and close to BJ's Wholesale.

Visit your local fire station. October is fire safety month with lots of public events in different towns. Stop by at other times and see if they have a few free minutes.

Papa Gino's

Kid's Night is every Thursday from 4-8pm featuring arts & crafts, games or other entertainment such as a clown. No purchase necessary. Show your Shaw's Rewards Card and receive \$5 off two large pizzas!

Recreation Department Programs

Your town's Recreation Department may offer programs for moms and/or kids of all ages. Great way to meet other moms in your town with kids around the same ages as yours.

Make Tents

Drag out all the blankets and let the kids make forts or tents in the living room. Hours and hours of fun.

Play in the Bathtub

Grab your favorite magazines, line the bathroom floor with lots of towels, and whip up a warm bubble bath for the kids. Add a few toys (squirt guns, plastic bottles, sponges, swim goggles, diving masks & snorkels). The kids will have a blast and look like prunes, while you get a little break.

Have a Dance Party

Crank the tunes (kiddie, disco, oldies, country, square dancing, classical—The Nutcracker Suite) and have a dance party! We did this a lot...mostly late in the day while waiting for Daddy to come home and rescue Mommy. Fun way to introduce kids to different kinds of music. Mix it up with instruments and props--scarves, hats, costumes, etc.

Lunch with Daddy

Pack a picnic and meet Daddy for lunch!

AVON

Jordan's Furniture

Off Route 24...508-580-4900. www.jordans.com

Enjoy the Bourbon Street entrance, an old-fashioned ragtime band, and maybe even a bag of popcorn, an ice cream cone, and a balloon. This store features the Motion Odyssey Movie Ride (MOM), a turbulent thrill ride that will take you thru an old mine shaft, a high speed police chase, an airboat cruise across the gator-filled Everglades, as well as an amazing laser pre-show! \$5/adults, \$4/kids 13 and under.

ABINGTON

Abington Town Playground

Behind the Early Childhood Education Center on Ralph Hamlin Drive, which is right off Washington Street. Features an extremely large wooden structure. Not fenced in, but there is so much for the kids to do. Only downside is that the wooden structure has many obstructed views.

Johnson Dairy Barn, Route 18

This ice cream stand features a little "petting zoo" with goats, cows, horses, chickens, ducks, and rabbits awaiting your visit. Opens after April 1st.

The Christmas Place, Route 18, Weymouth Line

From late October through New Year's, you can take the kids to "The Largest Christmas Store in New England" and watch their eyes fill with wonder as they take in the thousands of different ornaments and displays—Victorian, gingerbread, country, indoor/outdoor, real and artificial trees, including an huge Playmobil display that all kids love. Santa is there on the weekends for pictures. There's also a small café serving cookies, hot chocolate, coffee, etc. Get there early in the day before the crowds.

BOSTON

Boston Children's Museum

www.bostonkids.org

Friday nights from 5-9pm, admission is just \$1 for all ages. What a bargain and so much fun! Check with your library for discounted passes to use during regular hours.

Boston Harbor Islands, a national park area
617-223-8666...www.bostonharborislands.org

The Harbor Islands offer many activities in different seasons for a variety of audiences, including guided tours by boat and on foot, lighthouse tours, family fun days, and special events. *Note:* George's and Peddock islands have paved walkways suitable for strollers. Passenger ferries, shuttle boats, and tour boats bring visitors to the islands from May to October, departing from Hull, Quincy, and Boston—Long Wharf and Fan Pier. 2004 Rates: \$10/adults. Call for ferry schedules and rates on seniors and kids.

Franklin Park Zoo, Franklin Park Road

617-541-LION...www.zoonewengland.com

Special attractions include the lions, giraffes, butterfly landing (\$1 extra) and the baby gorilla born in Nov 2004! Family memberships (2 adults, 4 kids) to Zoo New England for one year costs \$55 and gives you unlimited access to the Franklin Park Zoo in Boston and the Stone Zoo just off Rt. 93 in Stoneham. Many zoos across the country, including the Roger Williams Park Zoo in Providence, offer free admission to Zoo New England members. If you're going on vacation, check this online list to see if there's one nearby: www.zoonewengland.org/involve/reciplist.shtml. Check with your local library for discounted, one-day tickets. You may also want to visit their website regularly for a calendar of current events which are geared toward children of varying ages.

Jamaica Plain Pond

Great for running around, biking, etc. during the week.

New England Aquarium

www.neaq.org

VERY expensive – but you can join as a family for a year for less than \$100. If you go often enough, it's worth it. Check with your local library for discounted passes!

Prudential Tower

1-800-SHOP-PRU or 617-859-0648

www.prudentialcenter.com/play/skywalk.html

The tower's observation deck, The Prudential Skywalk, offers a 360° panoramic view of the city, on the 50th floor. Great views on a clear day...buy/bring lunch at the food court. Open Mon-Sun., 10-10. *Note:* The Skywalk closes for private functions...call ahead to confirm that they will be open. Adults \$9.50, Seniors \$7, Children under 12 \$6.50. Parking can be a little expensive, but it's worth it! Check with your local library for discount tickets or search online for discounts from the Boston Visitor's Bureau and the like.

BRAINTREE

Borders Books

Kmart Plaza...781-356-5111

Free story time on Wednesdays and Saturdays at 11am.

South Shore Plaza, various other malls

The Simon Malls offer special events, mall freebies and discounts, birthday presents, and more through their Kidgits Club. Sign up at www.simonkidgitsclub.com or visit the Customer Service Center. A good value at just \$5 per child.

BROCKTON

Brockton Rox Professional Baseball

Campanelli Stadium www.brocktonrox.com

Awesome place to take your kids. Cheap seats; reasonable food prices (although I'd still sneak in a few water bottles and a bag or two of snacks to control expenses.) Sundays are Family FUNDays, featuring all sorts of silly entertainment between innings. Before the game kids can get players' autographs at the dugout (bring baseballs and hats and a pen), and after the game kids love to run the bases. Special FUNday kid's activities have included face painting, a moonwalk, pony rides, etc. Friday nights feature fireworks at the end of the game. Check out the special Rox-a-Bye Baby Suite solely for use by parents of babies and very young children. Formerly a luxury suite, it's now a place for parents to bring their babies and young children who need to be changed, fed, or otherwise taken care of, or just need a break from the excitement. "It's not intended to be used for the whole game. It's just meant as a respite." Passes for the Rox-a-Bye Baby Suite are available for free and can be picked up at the Rockland Trust Guest Services booth along the third base side of the concourse. The suite features free folic acid pill bottles from the March of Dimes and free baby items courtesy of the First Years. *Note:* Buy tickets at the box office on game day or even better, go on-line to select your seats, order tickets, and then pick them up at the box office.

BURLINGTON

Pottery Barn Stores have free song times at the Burlington—781-221-5833, Atrium (Rt.9E/Chestnut Hill) 617-928-0670, and Natick Malls—508-653-4675. Call each store for more information. For the Burlington store, combine with lunch at the Rainforest Café...

Rainforest Café

Near Lord & Taylor at the Burlington Mall

800-552-6379 ext. 5235...www.rainforestcafe.com

This unique restaurant is an adventure through the most realistic indoor rain forest ever created. The kids love the waterfalls, giant aquariums, and the "animals" that periodically come to life. Definitely worth the trip. *Family night is every Wednesday from 5pm to close. Kids 12 & under eat for \$1.99 w/ purchase of an adult entrée.* Join the Safari Club (\$15) on-line before you go and get a \$10 New Member Award by mail. The Safari Club card also entitles you to 10% off food or a free appetizer, priority seating, 10% off merchandise, and special birthday offers.

CAPE COD

Cape Cod Canal

Traverse the paved paths along the canal by foot or on bikes, scooters, or rollerblades! Great spot for a picnic, too!

CHESTNUT HILL

Check out the Boston College Girl's Basketball games ... exciting, inexpensive, and loaded with GIRL POWER!
www.bceagles.edu

COHASSET

Buttonwoods Books & Toys

Rt. 3A, Shaw's Plaza

781-383-2665...www.buttonwoodbooks.com

Free! Story Time on Tuesday mornings at 10 for ages 2-5. No reservations necessary. Voted the best toy store on the South Shore. Their website includes reviews of new children's books, all sorted by age.

Kaleidoscope Children's Theatre

South Shore Music Circus, Sohier St., Cohasset

617-931-2787...www.themusiccircus.org.

Great way to introduce your kids to the arts. Shows are in the amphitheater on Thursdays at 10:30am in the summer. Call or visit the box office for tickets.

Snow White--July 7th

Beauty & The Beats--July 21st

Rapunzel--July 28th

Cinderella--Aug 4th

The Emperor's New Clothes--August 18th

The Frog Prince--August 25th

Our World Children's Global Discovery Museum

100 Sohier St., behind the Pratt Memorial Library

781-383-3198...www.ourworldcogdm.org

This opened in Feb/2005, so I imagine they will add more but it's nice for the little ones. They have an enclosed space with soft, low climbing structures that is perfect for crawlers thru toddlers. Great for the three and under set, although older ones would still enjoy themselves. They also have toys, blocks and some dress up things. The only downfall is that the bigger kids can open the gate, which they like to do often so the little ones are always escaping. There's a craft table, which is awesome and then another big room that at this time only had a tent and a tunnel and a piano. They are planning on adding more on the 2nd floor for older kids, perhaps a Wildlife exhibit. (Note: According to the website, it looks like they have big plans for the future.) \$3 per child.

EASTON

Children's Museum

9 Sullivan Ave, North Easton

508-230-3789...www.childrensmuseumineaston.org

Housed in the Old Fire Station in historic North Easton Village, the Museum exhibits feature themes from the arts, sciences and humanities with a primary focus on children ages 1-8. The Museum is open to the public six days per week, year-round. Interactive exhibits include a fire station, stage, fishing boat and kids' clinic. Creative play is inspired in the Performance Center, SS Rose-Marie, Enchanted Forest, Dinosaur Table, and Kidsclinic. In Kidspace, they can ride the Fire Truck and work at the Diner or Post Office. They can make projects to take home in the Arts & Crafts and Woodshop. The Museum's ZOOMzone™ is a space that recreates the look and feel of ZOOM, the popular PBS kids' show. Your library may offer discounted passes.

FALL RIVER

Battleship Cove

800 533-3194...www.battleshipcove.org

With the [world's largest collection](#) of historic naval ships and home to five National Historic Landmarks, Battleship Cove is the guardian of our nation's democratic heritage. Experience firsthand what it was like to serve on board a Navy warship in WWII. Kids (or you!) can sound the diving horn on [Submarine Lionfish](#) before slipping below the sea...crank the hand wheels on [Big Mamie's](#) 40-mm guns as you knock enemy planes from the sky.... and more! Kids can also ride the carousel rescued from the defunct Lincoln Park (50¢ per ride...3/\$1). For lunch, there are a few picnic areas, as well as reasonably priced food in the Officers' Wardroom on board [USS Massachusetts](#), at the Carousel Café or outside at the Pierside Snack Bar. Rates: Family membership \$55/year or Adults \$14, Kids 6-14 \$8, Kids under 6 Free. Discounts offered for membership cards to AAA, WGBH, Mass. Teachers Assoc., etc. There is also a discount coupon available on the website.

HANOVER

A.C. Moore

Hanover Mall...781-829-0680... acmoore.com/classes.asp

They sometimes offer make-and-take classes for kids of various ages-- toddlers and up. You can sign up on their website to receive information via email.

Briggs Stable

623 Hanover Street...781-826-3191

Bring the kids to just walk around the stables to say hi to the horses. Open year round. On Wednesday nights during the summer, there are free horse shows open to the public. Hot dogs and hamburgers are available to purchase to make for a nice picnic. Call to check the schedule.

Fin, Fur & Feather

Building 19 Plaza...781-826-5739.

This pet shop lets kids feed the small shark several days a week from 4-6pm. Call in advance to make an appointment. There are a large variety of animals here: dogs, cats, fish, turtles, snakes, iguanas, mice, gerbils, hamsters, parakeets...

Hanover Mall

www.hanovermall.com

Indoor playroom near the Wal-Mart mall entrance *and* the restrooms! Free! Looks small (1 little house, 1 slide), but after a long, rainy/snowy week, the kids love it. For toddlers.

Also, kids under 12 can join the Kid's Birthday Club and on the child's birthday receive a \$5 mall gift certificate and a coupon for a free McDonald's Happy Meal! Sign up at the Customer Service Center.

Get out your carriage, pack up the kids, and walk some measured miles with the free Stepping Healthy Mall Walking Program. Just register at the Customer Service Center. Mon-Sat 7 to 10am, Sun. 9 to 11am. Start at the entrance near the Public Safety Center/Indoor playroom.

Hanover Police Boy's Club

Behind Town Hall...781-826-4869

SMOM Dawn Horlbeck (horlbeck@comcast.net) teaches Kickboxing here every Tuesday and Thursday night at 6:30pm. Beginners of all ages are welcome! It's drop-in, so you come when you want. \$5 per class! There are also children's yoga classes here on weekday afternoons. For more information on yoga, contact Robin Killeen by email at RNRRelief@aol.com.

Michael's Arts & Crafts

Next to Pier 1 on Route 53

781-829-6571...www.michaels.com

Bring the kids (ages 5-12) to Kid's Club Imagination Days every Saturday for a fun activity that's different each week. Come and go between 10am-Noon. \$2 per child. Parents must stay in the store...the projects take about 20 minutes. Great place to have a fun, inexpensive birthday parties.

PETCO

Hanover Mall next to OfficeMax

This is a fun way to enjoy some time with your kids. They'll love seeing the menagerie of fish, mice, hamsters, rabbits, iguanas, snakes, etc. Many dog owners bring their dogs into the store with them, so you may get to pat a new puppy!

Storybook Cove

Merchants Row, Assinippi Corner, Rt. 53

781-871-7801...www.storybookcove.com

Free! There's always a different story, craft, and/or game happening here for kids of varying ages. Reservations required. Visit their website frequently for upcoming events, as well as great lists of recommended reading.

Mazes Playground

On Rt. 139 in front of the public library, next to the gazebo.

Features a rock-climbing wall. Best for ages 4+.

Patriot Cinemas

Behind the Hanover Mall

781-826-2230...www.patriotcinemas.com

All seats are \$5 every Tuesday night and every day until 6pm. Children under 12 are always \$5. The Kids Pack can be a good value...drink, popcorn, and one piece of candy in an easy-to-hold tray. No more spills! Owned and operated by SMOM Marybeth Scott's family!

HINGHAM

New England Wildlife Center

19 Fort Hill Street...781-749-5387... www.newwildlife.com

See a variety of rescued creatures (owl, very large turtle, lots more) in a Clinic Tour. Admission \$5.

Pilgrim Arena

781-749-6660...www.skatepilgrim.com

'Little People' open skate for kids 5 and under every Tues. and Thurs. at 9:45 and 1:00. \$2.50 each. Or rent a rink for an hour a week (\$25) with friends and classmates.

Weir River Farm

Turkey Hill Road...781-740-7233

www.thetrustees.org/pages/391_weir_river_farm.cfm

This 75-acre farm features a barnyard full of horses, sheep, llamas, pigs, chickens, rabbits, etc. The walking trails are open year-round from sunrise to sunset. The Barnyard opens in April with sheep shearing and closes in October with a fall festival. Outdoor Story Hours in the summer. Free to Trustees of the Reservations members, \$3 for non-members.

Wompatuck State Park

Follow Signs on Rt. 228...781-749-7160

www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/southeast/womp.htm

12 miles of paved trails. Fishing and swimming are available. Public campground with picnic and rest facilities. Main building for a map and restrooms. *Note: This is a very wooded area: go with another adult and carry your cell phone.*

World's End Reservation

250 Martin Lane...781-740-6665

www.thetrustees.org/pages/393_world_s_end.cfm

4 miles of paths offer beautiful views of the Harbor and the Boston skyline. Small beach for creature hunting--no swimming. Potties near the parking lot but far from paths. Jogging strollers are fine. Free with membership in The Trustees of the Reservations (pay at entrance), which oversees dozens of properties of great scenic, historic, and ecological value. (Members receive a book describing all of the other Massachusetts properties included in membership.) Non-members: adults \$4.50, kids 12 & under free.

HULL

Nantasket Beach

Fly kites or let the kids run the beach to chase waves and seagulls! Enjoy fantastic fish & chips at Jake's Seafood Restaurant (a little pricey), take a ride on the old Paragon Park Carousel, and finish with an ice cream from one of the nearby vendors. Many summer Sunday afternoons feature free concerts where you can sit under the shade of the pavilion and let the kids dance to a variety of music. Bathhouses, restrooms, and a playground.

KINGSTON

Borders Books

Independence Mall...781-582-8100

Free story time on Wednesdays and Fridays at 10:30am.

Independence Mall

Route 3 South, Exit 8...781-582-2445

Wednesday night is Kids Night in the food court from 5-6:30pm. Features meal deals and a FREE fun activity.

Lowe's Home Improvement

781-217-2000...www.lowes.com

Kids get to build fun projects like a toolbox or a Tic-Tac-Toe Board at these FREE Build & Grow Kids' Clinics which are scheduled at 10am on the second Saturday of each month. Sign up on their website by selecting Project Center and then How to Clinics.

Regal Cinemas

Independence Mall...781-582-2000

www.regalcinemedia.com/AdFilmReleaseSchedule.asp

During the summer of 2004, this cinema offered free kid's movies one morning per week. Maybe they'll do it again!

MARSHFIELD

Daniel Webster Sanctuary

781-837-9400...www.massaudubon.org

Huge boardwalk that winds through the sanctuary. See lots of birds and other wildlife, including heron, egrets, and muskrats. Can get buggy...best in early spring and fall. The kids love to run through the fields and chase the geese here! Hosts the very fun Daniel Webster Farm Day in early October every year, as well as a variety of other seasonal and year-round educational programs.

Marshfield Municipal Airport

Shore Line Road...781-834-4928

Great place to go on a clear day. The kids really enjoy watching the planes land and take off. I hear they also offer tours of the airport.

Mazes Playground

In front of Marshfield High School

Large wooden structure that looks like a castle with all sorts of nooks and crannies to play in, including 3-4 slides for all different levels. Always sunny, except on cloudy days, of course! Picnic tables. No restrooms, but Starbucks & Dunkin' Donuts are nearby. Ages 2+.

Nelson Reservation

This is our favorite place to take the family and the dog for a walk in the woods. Sometimes you see locals on their horses. There are a few paths. Some go down to the North River. Very pretty in winter (bring sleds to pull the kiddies!!) Directions: Rt. 3A north, go over North River bridge, right on to Summer street, right at end (I don't know the name of this road), small dirt/grass parking lot almost at the top of the hill on the right.

Rafferty's

14 Webster Square

Free Comedy Nights every other Sunday night. See local comedians, as well as Boston comedians trying out new materials. Contact past SMOM co-leader Chrissy Kelleher at kelleh7@aol.com for more details.

Skateboard Park

Great place to sit with the kids on the benches and watch the extreme sports dudes practice their wicked awesome stunts.

NORWELL

Finagle-a-Bagel

Rt. 53, next to McDonald's...781-871-2966

Free! Music Man Ed plays fun kid songs on a guitar and sings. Kids dance (or not). Tuesdays from 3-4pm.

Gaffield Park

Great new playground for kids of all ages on the corner of Dover & Forest Streets (just off the center, near River Street, Post Office, Police Station & Norris Reservation.)

Jacobs Farm

Corner of Rt. 123 and Jacobs Lane at Norwell/Hanover line
The chickens, turkeys, sheep, and ducks that live in the red barn love visitors. Venture into the barn to see more animals that might be hiding. Open year round.

The James Library & Center for the Arts

24 West Street, Norwell Center...781-659-7100

This small library offers children's story times and other fun activities from time to time. Worth checking out.

Norris Reservation

Dover Street, just off Rt. 123/Main St., across from the Post Office and Gaffield Park. This is a popular place to take the family (and the dog) for a walk. Quiet woods and nice trails that go down to the North River. Short trail (stay left) is about 20 minutes and leads to an old boathouse on the North River. There can be large tree roots to walk over, so wee ones should be in a carrier or backpack. This is a little tough (bumpy!) with a jogging stroller, but manageable.

St. Helen's Church

Route 53 near TGIFriday's...781-659-2993

Free indoor playgroup every Tuesday morning from 9:30-11.

There's also a free drop-in Children's Bible Story & Sing-Along every other week. Short Bible story, then a very sweet sing-along. Lots of fun! Call for schedule.

South Shore Natural Science Center

Jacob's Lane off Rt. 123 near the Rts. 53 & 123 intersection
781-659-2559... www.ssnsc.org

Walk the six nature trails or sign the kids up for one of the many programs which offer indoor and outdoor learning, all set on 30 acres surrounded by 200 acres of conservation land. Jeff Corwin, the Norwell native and popular animal biologist on cable TV's Animal Planet, frequented the Science Center growing up. Children explore diverse habitats: woodlands, meadow, wetlands, and Jacobs Pond. Inside, children meet wildlife, take part in real scientific tests, and enjoy hands-on exhibits. **Feed the animals every Wednesday at 3pm and Saturdays at 10 am.** Check their website for many special events that are scheduled throughout the year. Hours: Mon-Sat, 9:30am-4:30pm. Family membership: \$50/year. Non-Members: \$5/adult, \$3/kids 2-15 and seniors.

South Shore Track Club

Norwell High School Track/Football Field...781-659-4037.

Chuck Martin and The South Shore Track & Field Club introduce kids to the basic skills of track and field on Monday and Wednesday nights in the summer from 6:00 to 7:30pm. Their philosophy is low-key summertime fun--attend whenever you want. Great opportunity to get your own nightly walk/run in at the track. Kids under 6 are free. For kids 6 and older: \$50 for the 1st child, \$25 for the second, and the third is free. All money raised helps pay the staff (usually from the high school track team).

Webb's Pro Fitness

Route 53 near Marsh's Liquors & Brooks Pharmacy

SMOM Dawn Horlbeck teaches a 45-minute FitKids class on Wednesdays at 11am. Membership not required. \$8 for the first child, \$4 for siblings...even cheaper if you buy four classes upfront. 781-878-7900

PEMBROKE

Au Bon Pain

On Route 139 between The 99 & Friendly's...781-826-9729

Kid-friendly, great staff, healthy food (fresh fruit cups) with a water wall and rocks to play with. Kids can also play "healthy choice" bobsledding, skiing, etc. on the computer. Great on weekdays.

Creative Playthings

70 Corporate Park Drive, off Rt. 139...781-829-1111

www.creativeplaythings.com

Free! Let the kids play on the indoor swing sets while you pretend that you're going to buy something. Great way to spend an hour or two. *Note: Big discounts on swing sets available in Jan/Feb/Mar. Birthday parties available here!*

Hobomock Ice Arena

781-294-0260... www.hobomock-arenas.com

Tot Lessons (2+ yrs.) and Peanut Hockey (3-7 yrs) through the Northern Star Skating Institute and lessons for 5+ yrs. through the Pilgrim Skating Club.

Lowe's Home Improvement

781-499-4016...www.lowes.com

Kids get to build fun projects like a toolbox or a Tic-Tac-Toe Board at these FREE Build & Grow Kids' Clinics which are scheduled at 10am on the second Saturday of each month. Sign up on their website by selecting Project Center and then How to Clinics.

Rainbow Park Playground

Behind North Pembroke Elementary School.

Brand new plastic playground featuring three large structures geared for different ages. Fence. Open to the public during non-school hours.

Scalliwags

330-350 Corporate Park...www.scalliwags.com

Lots of fun in the soft play structure that has three levels of shoots, slides, soft tumble trampolines, and fun pits. Parents can see into almost every nook and cranny. And the Magic Bus bounce-o-line lets kids ump and slide in complete enclosed safety. See their [Special Events Calendar](#) for scavenger hunts, storytelling and more! *Parents are free!*

PLYMOUTH

Armstrong Ice Arena

103 Long Pond Road...508-982-8166

www.fmcarenas.com/plymouth/ply_home.htm

Public skating Mon.-Fri. from 10-noon, Sat. & Sun. from 2:30-4:30, \$4 for adults, \$2 for children. Rentals available.

Plimoth Plantation

www.plimoth.org ... Route 3S to Exit 4. Follow the signs.

Go to www.plimoth.org/visit/calendar for a list of special events. Tickets are expensive (\$21/adults, \$19/seniors, \$12/kids 6-12), but many local libraries have deeply discounted passes, making it quite reasonable. Concession stand and seasonal food carts. Suitable for jogging strollers.

Plymouth Harbor

Walk along the jetty, see the boats go in and out, feed the ducks, and then get a homemade ice cream from the locally renowned Peaceful Meadows!

Plymouth Municipal Airport & Plane Jane's Café

508-746-2020...www.pymairport.org

Great spot to take the kids to watch the airplanes (and sometimes helicopters) take off and land. Enjoy the view while having breakfast or lunch on the deck at Plane Jane's Café or at the picnic tables on the ground. Pick a sunny day for the most action! *Note: Get there early on the weekends for the best seats.* *Directions:* Route 3S to Exit 6B (Route 44W, Carver). At second set of lights, turn left onto Pilgrim Hill Rd. At top of hill, turn right on Summer St. Follow for 2 miles. At first set of lights, turn right onto South Meadow Rd. Follow for 2 miles to airport. Enter at Gate 2.

Village Green

Downtown Plymouth, across the street from the Governor Bradford Hotel. Great place to feed the ducks at the duck pond. Bring some crackers and old bread.

PROVIDENCE

Roger Williams Park Zoo

Just off Rt. 95...www.rogerwilliamsparkzoo.org

Free admission to ZooNew England members. Your local library may also offer discounted passes. The polar bears are our favorite! There's also a free playground here. *Directions:* I-95 South to Exit 17 (Elmwood Ave.) Left at light. Park entrance is ½ block on left. Follow signs.

WaterFire

www.waterfire.org

Free! WaterFire is an award-winning fire sculpture centered on a series of 100 bonfires (2/3 mile) that blaze just above the surface of the three rivers that pass through the middle of downtown Providence. Great to stroll along the river while listening to a memorable and eclectic selection of classical and world music that serves as a melodic accompaniment to the normal sounds of urban life. Fires blaze from sunset to after midnight.

QUINCY

U.S. Naval Shipbuilding Museum

Fore River Shipyard...617-479-7900 www.uss-salem.org

Board the U.S.S. Salem, a U.S. Navy battleship used in the early 1900s, and have a blast exploring all four (or 5) decks, including the galley, officers' quarters, the hospital, the dentist's office, the brink, and more. Sit in the navigator's seat, turn the steering wheel, check out the artillery, or gaze in awe at the crow's nest. The ship is also available for special events such as birthday parties. They also host an annual Easter Egg Hunt with the Easter Bunny, face painting, etc., for a reasonable fee. Open year round. Call for hours and admission fees. Sneakers recommended.

READING, WAKEFIELD, STONEHAM

Jordan's Furniture

50 Walkers Brook Drive, Reading...781-944-9090

Just 10 miles north of Boston...only two exits from the 93/95 cloverleaf. Walk into the Reading store, the newest in the chain featuring the latest in "shoppertainment", and you walk into Beantown, a city made out of jellybeans, including the Green Monster, Beantown's Big Dig, The Duck Tour Game, etc. Anyone 6 and up can fly across "The Lenny Zakim Bridge" here at the only indoor Trapeze School in the US. www.boston.trapezeschool.com/classes/schedule.php Or how about a movie at the gigantic IMAX 3D Theater? (Call for the schedule and tickets \$.) BYO picnic and sit at one of the tables by the Liquid Fireworks Show, which is set to inspiring and danceable music, or have lunch in Johnny's Café, a diner-style restaurant offering new and old favorites, then follow it up with a cone from the Richardson's Ice Cream stand featuring ice cream from the famed Middleton dairy farm. Oh, and be prepared to be inspired by the furniture showrooms! This place is crazy on the weekends. Either get there early or go during the week. *Directions:* Rt. 93N to Rt. 128N to Exit 39 (North Ave, Wakefield). At end of ramp, left onto Walker's Brook Drive. Follow under the Rt. 128 overpass. Right after Chili's, then straight up the hill past Home Depot.

Lake Quannapowitt, Wakefield

10 miles north of Boston...two exits from the 93/95 cloverleaf and just down the street from Jordan's Furniture. This lake just off the center of town offers a lovely three-mile walk that is popular with joggers, walkers and moms pushing strollers. Enjoy a picnic on the Town Common at the head of the lake by the gazebo (and near a fenced playground behind the Congregational church), or at various other spots. Parking is available around the lake on Main St., at the office complex or in two lots (one at Veteran's Field/North Ave. and the other on **Common St. next to the Congregational church and the playground.)

The Stone Zoo

Pond Street, Stoneham...781-438-5100

Another great day with the kids. Check out the two jaguar cubs born in July 2004. Part of the ZooNew England family—see Franklin Park Zoo. *Directions:* Rt. 93 to Exit 34. Right at the first light. The zoo is ½ mile down on right. This is also just a couple of exits away from Lake Quannapowitt and Jordan's Furniture, see above.

ROCKLAND

Home Depot

Free! Ride the car carts. Sometimes, you just need to get them out of the house!

For children ages 6-12, Kids Workshops are free "How-To Clinics" available the first Saturday of each month at all Home Depot stores. Kids with an adult construct projects from pre-fabricated kits. Projects range from wooden birdhouses, step stools and sailboats to more educational projects like the plastic bag recycle box and window bird box, where kids can watch the birds build their nests. The workshops teach children do-it-yourself skills and tool safety, while at the same time helping to instill a sense of accomplishment. Additionally, this fun time allows for quality one-on-one time between adults and children. In addition to the newly constructed project kit, each child receives a kid-sized orange apron, similar to a Home Depot associate's apron, and an achievement pin. In Rockland, arrive between 9 and 11:30. Clean-up starts at noon.

NRC (North River Collaborative) Family Network

This organization provides playgroups, family activities, parent education workshops, parent support groups & information about community resources to families with children under the age of 4 in the towns of **Abington, Bridgewater, East Bridgewater, Hanover, Hanson, Raynham, Rockland, West Bridgewater & Whitman**. (*Note that all services are provided free of charge and many programs include free childcare. Families from other towns may participate in their activities for a small fee.*) Programs are held in Rockland and at a variety of locations including Bridgewater, Whitman, the Hanover Mall, Raynham, and area libraries. To be added to their email list, contact Rosemary Chretien, rchretien@nrcollab.org 781-681-9736. For more information, including a current calendar of events, visit www.northrivercollaborative.org/network.html.

Rockland Rink

599 Summer Street

781-740-2255...www.RocklandIceRink.com

Free! Public skating every Tuesday & Thursday from 11am-1pm. Also, **The Winterland Skating School** offers several learn-to-skate programs here for all ages and all levels. Ages 3-adult: Mondays at 6pm and Wednesdays at 5:15pm. Ages 4-adult: Saturdays at 9:20am. Tots 3-6 years: Tuesdays at 10am and Thursdays at 1pm. All classes divided by age and level. www.WinterlandSkatingSchool.com

SOUTH BOSTON

Castle Island & Fort Independence

Rt. 93 North to City Point, at the end of Day Boulevard.

Great views of Boston Harbor and Logan International Airport. Sullivan's take-out only restaurant (seasonal) is located at the base of the castle and is very popular. Grab a quick lunch, an ice cream cone or bring your own picnic. Best hot dogs on the South Shore. Kids can chase seagulls, ride bikes or scooters, or enjoy the playground. If your kids are a little older, Fort Independence has great history. Guided tours of the castle are available to the public on weekends in June through August, from 12:00pm to 3:30pm. Public restrooms are also available on the island. *Note: It can be very windy at Castle Island, so dress appropriately for the weather conditions. Also, because of the close proximity to the airport, it can be quite loud when a plane flies overhead.*

SHREWSBURY

Herbert Candy Mansion, 575 Hartford Turnpike (Rt. 20)

508-845-8051...www.herbertcandies.com

Voted one of Boston Parent's Magazine favorite kids tours in Massachusetts! Come see candy be made. The tour, which leaves every 30-minutes includes seeing tanks that store of 100,000 lbs. of chocolate. Reminds you of Willy Wonka! Best of all, there are samples for everyone. After the tour, browse through the tempting store and visit the make-your-own-sundae bar! Cost is \$3.75 per sundae, but Mansion admission and tours are FREE!

SCITUATE

Cole Parkway, off Front Street on the Harbor

Walk along the fishermen's pier and feed the ducks or just look at the boats. This is much more enjoyable at high tide than low tide for obvious reasons.

Patriot Cinemas

Mill Wharf Plaza, Scituate Harbor

781-545-3130...www.patriotcinemas.com

All seats are \$5 every Tuesday night and every day until 6pm. Children under 12 are always \$5. The Kids Pack is a good deal...drink, popcorn, and one piece of candy in an easy-to-hold tray. No more fighting over the popcorn! Owned and operated by SMOM Marybeth Scott's family!

The **St. Patrick's Day** parade is great family fun! Go to www.weloveaparade.com for details.

Satuit Bowling

Scituate Harbor...781-545-9726

Kids love it and if you have little ones where you don't keep score, the guy will charge you \$5 for a family for half an hour and \$10 for an hour.

Scituate Lighthouse

www.scituatehistoricalsociety.org/sites_lighthouse.html

www.cyberlights.com/lh/mass/scituate.htm

Kids can climb on the rocks to look for crabs, starfish, sea glass, etc. Or relax on the jetty and watch the boats and the tide coming and going. There's always a nice breeze here. Good on a hot day. Directions: From Front St., take Jericho Rd. for 0.8 m., then right onto Lighthouse Road.

Tree-Berry Farm

Route 139, Scituate (across from That Bloomin' Place)

Everyone loves to go blueberry picking from late July to mid- or late-August! Bring your camera--the pictures are priceless! Bushes are a great height for children of all ages to reach the berries, plus strollers fit between the rows! Sunhats, sunscreen, and bottles of water recommended. (It's sunny out there.) Best to go in the morning...vaguely recall that they close by the early afternoon. Cost: They weigh the blueberries by the pound. (Good thing they don't weigh the kids before and after!)

WESTFORD

The Butterfly Place, 120 Tyngsboro Road
978-392-0955...www.butterflyplace-ma.com

Visit this atrium, an indoor living environment that has been carefully designed for the development of some of nature's most colorful living creations. Within the atrium's living butterfly environment are a variety of colorful plants and shrubs, each of which has been selected as a source of nectar for the butterflies. At any given time, the atrium may contain up to 500 butterflies representing as many as 50 different species from around the world. Bring your camera! Note: Children under three MUST be in strollers, backpacks, carried or held by the hand. Adults \$8.50, Seniors \$6.50, Kids 3-12 \$6.00, Kids 2 and under free.

WEYMOUTH

Cameo Theatres

Columbian Square, just behind the hospital
781-335-2777...www.patriotcinemas.com

All seats are \$4 every Tuesday night and every day until 6pm. Kids under 12 are always \$4. The Kids Pack is a good deal...drink, popcorn, and one piece of candy in an easy-to-hold tray. No more fighting over the popcorn! Owned and operated by SMOM Marybeth Scott's family!

Child's Play Museum

293 Libbey Industrial Parkway...781-337-7920
Recommended by several SMOMs and their toddlers. Features an open play area with many different "stations." \$5 per person, including parent(s). Coupon books available—12 visits for \$45. You have to ask for it, though.

Connell Memorial Rink

220 Broad Street...781-335-2090
Public skating on Saturdays and Sundays from 2-4pm, and Bay State Skating School (781-890-8480) offers skating programs here on Fri. at 4pm and Sun. at 11am.

Lowe's Home Improvement

781-340-5964...www.lowes.com
Kids get to build fun projects like a toolbox or a Tic-Tac-Toe Board at these FREE Build & Grow Kids' Clinics which are scheduled at 10am on the second Saturday of each month. Sign up on their website by selecting Project Center and then How to Clinics.

McDonald's Playgrounds are free and fun. The one on Rt. 18 (next to Bldg. 19) is huge. *Bonus:* BJ's Wholesale Club is on Rt. 53 right behind this McDonald's. From McDonald's parking lot, turn R onto Rt. 18. At the first set of lights, turn R onto Rt. 53. BJ's is ¼ mile on the left.

WHITMAN

Carousel Family of Fun/Skate Town

Route 14, off Route 18...Turn right at Wendy's
Fun and inexpensive place to take the kids roller skating! Nice family atmosphere. Admission is \$4, skate rentals are \$2.25. You can even bring your own skates or rollerblades. Heelys are not allowed.

Peaceful Meadows Ice Cream Shop

60 Bedford Street, Rt. 18...781-447-3889
Here's some of the best homemade ice cream around! Straight from the cows that are often in the barn and in the fields behind the ice cream stand. According to the staff, the cows are milked twice a day. Open year round.

Town Park Playground

Corner of Whitman and Maple Avenues, near the intersection of Rts. 18 & 27. This is a new playground with lots of climbing structures and slides. No fence.

AND MORE!

For a great list of more than 850 things to do on the South Shore, visit www.momsanddadsguide.com. You'll find information on camps, community events, preschools, birthday parties, etc., etc. You can also pick up a free hardy copy of the Mom's & Dad's Guide at any South Shore Coldwell Banker office in Cohasset, Duxbury, Hingham, Hull, Marshfield, Norwell, Plymouth, and Scituate. *Note: I have asked the publishers to send us some of these to distribute at the April meeting. Hopefully they will. Either way, we are signed up to receive multiple copies when new issues are published each September.*

The Mariner newspapers publish a monthly on-line calendar of things to do on the South Shore. Check it out at www.townonline.com/parentsandkids, and then click on Calendar of Events under the 'This Week At a Glance' section.

CHEAP THINGS TO DO EACH DAY

MONDAYS

7-10am: Free! Stepping Healthy Walking Program at The Hanover Mall.

9:30-11am on the last Monday of the month (Oct-May, but not Dec'05 & Jan'06): Free! Join other SMOMs and their children for an indoor playgroup in the Recreation Department's playroom in the Norwell Town Offices building on Rt. 123 in Norwell.

10am: On Monday holidays only, feed the animals at the South Shore Natural Science Center in Norwell. Free with admission.

10am-noon: Public skating at the Armstrong Ice Arena in Plymouth. \$3. Rentals available.

6-7:30pm: In the summer, Chuck Martin and The South Shore Track Club introduce kids to the basic skills of track and field. Kids under 6 are free. Look under Norwell for others. Norwell High School Track/Football Field

8-10pm: Free! Comedy Nights at the Backside Tavern, Webster Square, Marshfield, featuring local and Boston comedians. Contact Chrissy Kelleher at kelleh7@aol.com.

TUESDAYS

7-10am: Free! Stepping Healthy Walking Program at The Hanover Mall.

9:30-11am: Free! Indoor playgroup in St. Helen's Hall, Rt. 53, Norwell. Run by SMOM Dawn Horlbeck and her three girls. Stroller accessible.

10am: Free! Story time for ages 2-5 at Buttonwoods Books & Toys, Rt. 3A, Shaw's Plaza, Cohasset.

10am-noon: Public skating at the Armstrong Ice Arena in Plymouth. \$3. Rentals available.

9:45am and 1pm: Drop-in 'Little People' skating program at Pilgrim Ice Arena/Hingham (near Bertucci's) for kids 5 and under. \$2.50 each.

11am-1pm: Free! Public skating at the Rockland Ice Arena, 599 Summer Street.

3-4pm: Free! The Music Man plays his guitar for a sing-along at Finagle-a-Bagel, Rt. 53, Norwell. Free!

6:30-7:30pm: Kickboxing with SMOM Dawn Horlbeck at the Hanover Boy's Club, behind Hanover Town Hall. Beginners welcome! \$5.

WEDNESDAYS

7-10am: Free! Stepping Healthy Walking Program at The Hanover Mall.

10am-noon: Public skating at the Armstrong Ice Arena in Plymouth. \$3. Rentals available.

10:30am: Free! Story time at Borders Books in the Independence Mall, Kingston.

11am: Free! Story time at Borders Books, Kmart Plaza, Braintree.

3pm: Feed the animals at the South Shore Natural Science Center in Norwell. Free with admission.

5-6:30pm: Free! Kids Night in the food court at the Independence Mall in Kingston. Features meal deals and a FREE fun activity.

On Wednesday nights during the summer, there are free horse shows open to the public at Briggs Stable, 623 Hanover Street, Hanover. Hot dogs and hamburgers are available to purchase to make for a nice picnic. Call 781-826-3191 to check the schedule.

6-7:30pm: In the summer, Chuck Martin and The South Shore Track Club introduce kids to the basic skills of track and field. Kids under 6 are free. Look under Norwell for others. Norwell High School Track/Football Field

THURSDAYS

7-10am: Free! Stepping Healthy Walking Program at The Hanover Mall.

10-10:40am every other week: Free Children's Bible Story & Sing-Along at St. Helen's Hall, on Route 53 in Norwell. SMOM Dawn Horlbeck and her girls think it's very cute and fun! Call 781-659-2993 for schedule.

10am-noon: Public skating at the Armstrong Ice Arena in Plymouth. \$3. Rentals available.

9:45am and 1pm: Drop-in 'Little People' skating program at the Pilgrim Ice Arena in Hingham (near Bertucci's) for kids 5 and under. \$2.50 each.

10:30-11:15am: FitKids class run by SMOM Dawn Horlbeck at Webb's Pro Fitness, Rt. 53, Norwell.

11am-1pm: Free! Public skating at the Rockland Ice Arena.

6:30-7:30pm: Kickboxing with SMOM Dawn Horlbeck at the Hanover Boy's Club, behind Hanover Town Hall. Beginners welcome! \$5.

4-8pm: Free! KidsNight at Papa Gino's featuring games and/or entertainment. No purchased necessary.

FRIDAYS

7-10am: Free! Stepping Healthy Walking Program at The Hanover Mall.

10am-noon: Public skating at the Armstrong Ice Arena in Plymouth. \$3. Rentals available.

10:30-11am: Tales from the Wild for children ages 3-5 at the South Shore Science Center. Free with admission. Reservations required. Limit 12 kids.

10:30am: Free! Story time at Borders Books in the Independence Mall, Kingston.

5-9pm: Admission is just \$1 at the famed Boston Children's Museum.

SATURDAYS

7-10am: Free! Stepping Healthy Walking Program at The Hanover Mall.

10am: Feed the animals at the South Shore Natural Science Center in Norwell. Free with admission.

10am: Free Build & Grow Kids' Clinics on the second Saturday or everymonth at Lowe's Home Improvement. Make your reservation online at www.lowes.com, click on Projects, then click on classes.

10am-noon: Bring the kids (ages 5-12) to Kid's Club Imagination Days at Michael's Arts & Crafts for a fun activity that's different each week. \$2.50/child. Projects take about 20 minutes.

9-11:30am: Free! On the first Saturday of every month, Home Depot hosts a "How To Clinic" for kids aged 6-12. Call your local Home Depot for current times and projects. In Rockland, drop-in between 9 and 11:30. Clean-up starts at noon.

10am: Feed the animals at the South Shore Natural Science Center in Norwell. Free with admission.

2:30-4:30: Public skating at the Armstrong Ice Arena in Plymouth. \$4 for adults, \$2 for children. Rentals available.

SUNDAYS

9-11am: Free! Stepping Healthy Walking Program at the Hanover Mall.

2:30-4:30: Public skating at the Armstrong Ice Arena in Plymouth. \$4 for adults, \$2 for children. Rentals available.