

# Parent Times

September 2016



nc  pg

north central parenting group

# MOMS NIGHT OUT!

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14  
FROM 6PM-8PM

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Join us at Whole Foods Market Camelback  
for a night of delicious food and drinks!

Enjoy specials on our menu items including  
beers, wines, and specialty drinks.

Sample some of our exclusive cheeses and  
finish the evening off with a complimentary  
dessert pairing!

We look forward to hosting all our NCPG Moms!





ncpg

north central parenting group

## President's Corner

To the entire North Central Parenting Group community,

**WELCOME!** Welcome back to all of our returning members and to the new parents joining us this year, we are so excited to have you! As amazing as summer vacation can be, I've always loved the start of the "new year," smells a little less like sunscreen and a lot more like a brand new pack of Crayolas.

NCPG is all about learning, growing together, supporting one another, and of course having fun. As parents it's so important to believe in each other and admitting that sometimes raising kids isn't always sunshine, rainbows, and glitter (ironically I'm covered in glitter paint typing this, but that's neither here nor there). One of the best parts of NCPG is being a part of something bigger and having that extra level of support and friendship for those days that YOU JUST CAN'T EVEN...

I'm so lucky to have spent my summer with the rest of the fabulous board planning and organizing an amazing year ahead for everyone! We have a fun lineup of Mom's Night Outs, play-dates, philanthropy opportunities for the whole family, special events, and two amazing Fundraisers planned. We've also added two additional classes this year, Toddler 3 and Elementary 2, with two fabulous teachers to add to our already impressive roster.

There are so many ways to get involved with NCPG, one of which is joining one of our committees, so if you are interested please reach out to me and I'll happily get you connected. I am looking forward to spending this next year as your President, and am always available if you all need anything or have comments/suggestions on how to improve NCPG.

xo.

Ashley Blalock  
NCPG Board President  
[president@ncpgaz.org](mailto:president@ncpgaz.org)

P.S. – Join me September 14th @ 6pm, for our first MNO hosted by one of our newest sponsors, Whole Foods. You can find me at the bar. Cheers!

## NCPG 2016-2017 Board of Directors

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NCPG is a non-profit, non-denominational organization providing classes to parents of infant to elementary school age children.

[www.ncpgaz.org](http://www.ncpgaz.org)



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## Parent Times

Members, this monthly newsletter is for your benefit, so we want to ensure our team is publishing content that is valuable, useful, informative, and fun! Please let us know if you have suggestions, comments, concerns, or any input that would help us to improve this publication. Shoot us an email at [communications@ncpgaz.org](mailto:communications@ncpgaz.org). Thanks for your help!

**Editors** – Laura Beardsley & Laurie Ball

**Designer** – Neill Fox, [foxnoggin@gmail.com](mailto:foxnoggin@gmail.com)

## On the Cover

Olivia and Lilly Pakis photographed by Pam Funk of Moms at Heart Photography. See more of her work at [momsatheart.com](http://momsatheart.com).



# Dear Pre-Mom Self: It's Time To Let You Go!

by Anna Gannon  
huffingtonpost.com



## Let me just get this out of the way first: I love being a mother.

When people say they never knew what true love was until they became a parent, they aren't exaggerating. It's the single best thing that has ever happened in my life.

But I'd be lying if I said that I didn't sometimes miss my old life, pre-motherhood. I once heard that a mom described this feeling as "mourning her pre-mom self" and to be honest that's exactly how I've felt these last 8 months.

Mainly, I miss my alone time. I miss going for walks and not having to worry about when I'll return. I miss not worrying. I hate that I look at my old self and wish I could still look that rested, that I could still enjoy a yoga class and a long run in the same day. I hate feeling less interesting. I hate being a bad listener because one of my ears is always for my daughter.

I hate never having two hands. I hate that I don't know if I'm doing a good job every day.

But I love being a mother.

They say that in order for us to move on in life we must let our old selves go first. So today, I feel it's time to say goodbye...

## Dear Pre-Mom Self, I love you, I truly do, but it's time for me to let you go.

But first, I want to tell you how proud I am of you. In 31 years you grew more than I ever could have imagined. You never gave up, you kept evolving, changing and trying your best to be the best person you could. Thanks for knowing that you don't have to be dragged down by your past, your bravery to push forward is inspiring.

Thanks for following your dreams. You could have done what you thought you should by society standards, but instead you followed your heart. It wasn't always a smooth ride, but thanks for learning

from the bumps even when they hit you so hard that you felt like you couldn't see the ground anymore. You built yourself back up every time and you did it by looking at your own faults, not by blaming others (even though sometimes you did for a while). Thanks for taking responsibility. For finding humbleness and for learning that it's ok to say "I don't know."

And pre-mom self, have I ever told you how good you look? Seriously, when I look at pictures of you I see so much energy, so much excitement and inspiration. You're beautiful and I wish I told you that a long time ago.

But, pre-mom self, you should see how good I look as a mom now. I have bags under my eyes, a few extra pounds around my body, messy hair, last night's make-up and unbrushed teeth...

## I am radiant.

You should see how strong I am now, and I'm not talking about my muscles (those have softened a bit). I'm talking about the strength of my heart. I cry constantly because I've never felt this alive and connected. It's beautiful to feel everything this wholeheartedly.

I don't get much sleep now, but somehow my mind is also stronger than ever. I'm a modern day superwoman. I accomplish more in a day than you did in a week. But it's not a competition, you prepped me for this. You set me up with my best self before I made this leap into motherhood.

## Thank you for that.

But pre-mom self, I'm going to have to leave you behind. You see, I've changed and as much as I hate to admit it, I'm a different person now.

## I'm a mom.

But, don't worry. You've prepared me to love my mom self, to have more compassion for her and to let her find her own way. I would say "I'll miss you," but if you had had a chance to meet my daughter you'd realize that it's impossible to miss anything before she came into the world.



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## FUNDRAISING NEVER TASTED SO GOOD!

The North Central Parenting Group (NCPG) is excited to announce that we've partnered with **Grassroots Kitchen & Tap in Phoenix** to host a tasty fall fundraiser. Simply swing by the Grassroots location inside Town & Country any day between **September 25 - October 1, 2016**, and **20% of your bill will automatically go to supporting NCPG's effort in providing education for pregnant families up through middle school aged children.**

Even better, Grassroots is offering a \$1,000 cash prize for the local school or charity that raises the most funds during its weeklong fundraiser! So help us bring home the bacon by eating out at Grassroots this September 25 - October 1, 2016. And don't forget to tell your server that you are here to support the NCPG!

Family owned & operated by Central Phoenix native, Christopher Collins, Grassroots Kitchen & Tap tempts with a from-scratch menu of classic Southern-influenced American cuisine, polished service-first style and friends and family-focused vibe.

SEPTEMBER 25 - OCTOBER 1, 2016

20% of your bill will automatically go to support NCPG's education efforts for parents of infants and young children.



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kitchen & tap

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## NCPG Charity of the Month

### Maggie's Place

**PURPOSE:** To provide hospitality and ongoing support to help pregnant and parenting women in need reach their goals and welcome them into a community filled with love and dignity. Maggie's place provides for the immediate physical and emotional needs of qualifying women, including shelter, food, clothing and a supportive community.

**LOCATION:** Maggie's Place has four homes in Arizona: Phoenix, Tempe, Glendale and Mesa. Additionally, they also operate Maggie's Thrift in Phoenix.

**WAYS TO VOLUNTEER:** **House coverage:** Visit a home and get to know the moms first-hand; **Babysitting:** Consider volunteering your time as a babysitter; **Serve Saturday:** Once a month, the moms and volunteers work together to clean their home. You can volunteer as an individual or as a group; **Meal Preparation:** Drop off a meal at your convenience for the home nearest you or prepare it at the home with community food.

**DONATIONS:** Maggie's Place accepts all new and gently used items. Donations are accepted any day of the week from 9 am to 7 pm. The Fiat House, Mom's Outreach Center and Coordinating Office can accept donations Monday through Thursday from 9 am to 5 pm.



**maggiesplace.org**  
**volunteer@maggiespace.org**  
**602.262.5555 (ask for Laurel)**



# 6 TIPS FOR PACKING A TEACHER-APPROVED LUNCH BOX

By Rachelle Rosenblit, [Huffingtonpost.com](http://Huffingtonpost.com)

## THE SCHOOL YEAR IS IN FULL EFFECT AND WITH THAT COMES A NEW CHALLENGE: THE LUNCH BOX.

Over the 10 years I've taught as a kindergarten teacher, I have seen it all, from a lunch box that contained nothing but cookies and chips to one that contained a completely frozen Lean Cuisine. Lunch time is SO important for re-fueling and filling your little one with the nutrients they need to focus for an afternoon of learning. Here are my top tips for packing a teacher-approved lunch box!

### 1. MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD CAN OPEN EVERYTHING INDEPENDENTLY

Most schools have one or two lunch aides helping in the cafeteria if they are lucky. Most also have an entire grade level eating at the same time, which means the staff-to-student ratio can be anywhere from 1:50 to 1:200. As you can imagine, your child might be waiting a bit if they need help. Making sure they can open everything on their own will give them their full time to eat. Practice, practice, practice ahead of time! Can they pull back the cover of their Lunchable? Get their straw out of its plastic casing and into the juice box? Can they successfully open and close their thermos, Ziploc bags and plastic ware? Independence in the lunch room is our goal!

### 2. SEND ANY NEEDED UTENSILS

Some schools have utensils available. Most don't. Send a fork or a spoon if your child will need it for soup, yogurt, noodles, etc. If your child will need a utensil for snack time also, send two. Chances are the utensil they use at lunch time will get thrown away, and then they won't have one for snack time. Re-usable metal utensils are awesome, but make sure your child really understands that they are not to be thrown away. Perhaps designate a special pocket or compartment of the lunch box just for them.

### 3. KEEP SNACK SEPARATE

If your child's class will have snack time, find some way to designate the snack as something that should not be eaten at lunch time. You could keep it in a special reusable snack bag or container or keep it in the backpack, out of the lunch box all together. If the snack is in the lunch box with the rest of the food, chances are your child will eat it at lunch time and then have nothing to eat at snack time.



### 4. DON'T COUNT ON THERE BEING A MICROWAVE OR A FRIDGE

Most schools do not have a microwave or the adults to help with one. Don't send anything that will need to be heated up. If you are sending something warm, invest in a good thermos, and it will keep your child's food warm until lunch time! On the reverse, make sure you plan to keep the lunch box cold. Most teachers don't have fridges in their rooms for students to keep their lunches in. You can either use an ice pack, or a great tip is to freeze a yogurt tube! The yogurt tube will keep the other food cold and will be thawed out by lunch time!

### 5. THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO EXPERIMENT WITH NEW FOODS

Lunch time is often the only chance your child has to refuel for a full 8-hour day (or longer!) of learning. As teachers, we really need your child to eat so that they can focus. A hungry child is not going to be able to keep their mind on anything other than their empty stomach. Please, please, on behalf of teachers everywhere, send food you know your child likes. If you want to introduce your child to new foods, try them out at dinner or on the weekends. THEN, if your child likes them, you could send them in their lunch box to school.

### 6. NO THEY DON'T NEED DESSERT

We're looking for a well-rounded lunch here, ideally one that is high in protein and low in sugar. Sugar gets your child's body all jazzed up (I promise their teacher doesn't want that) and then leaves it to crash and burn. A child that has crashed and burned from a sugar high is not going to be able to accomplish anything, let alone their school work. A little sweet here or there, maybe on a Friday as a special treat is fine, but try not to load the lunch box up with junk food.

### BONUS TIP: PAY ATTENTION TO ANY ALLERGY INFORMATION

We are seeing this more and more. If your child's teacher gives out any information regarding allergies in the class, FOLLOW IT. Your kid may love peanut butter, but it's not worth risking another child's life. Our goal as teachers is to keep everyone happy, safe, and learning at school. Following any instructions regarding allergies will help us accomplish that. If it was your child, you would want the same.

**HOPE YOU FIND THESE TIPS USEFUL AS YOU START ASSEMBLING SCHOOL LUNCHES,  
AND I WISH YOU ALL THE MOST WONDERFUL SCHOOL YEAR!!**





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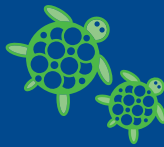
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# Meet Our Amazing Teachers!

We are delighted to have a fabulous group of teachers returning to NCPG this year with a few new additions! We encourage you to get to know a little bit more about all of these wonderful women. Also, our Class Reps will again be working hard to update you on the latest NCPG events and will be planning some great play dates throughout the year.



## Monique Nelson

### PRE-INFANT & INFANT I

Monique Nelson is a native Arizonan. She received her Bachelor of Science degree from Arizona State University in biology/premed. She holds an additional degree in nursing with

a clinical focus in pediatrics. Over the past 20 years she has enjoyed working in the field of pediatrics as a pediatric triage/advice nurse. She has also been teaching pregnancy, newborn, infant and toddler classes for the past 17 years. Monique teaches not only for North Central Parenting Group but Scottsdale Parenting Group as well. She also taught for East Valley Positive Parenting group before the group dissolved. Monique and her husband Dave just celebrated 20 years of marriage this past June and they are the proud parents of Taylor age 17 and Dylan age 12.



## Amy Stewart

### INFANT II

Amy has a Bachelor's of Science degree in Nursing and is currently completing her Masters in Nursing. She has worked as a Registered Nurse at Scottsdale Healthcare Shea for the past 12

years. After becoming a mother, Amy switched her nursing roles from adult care to pediatrics. She has earned her pediatric nurse certification. Amy has directed various programs and teaching projects throughout the hospital system. She has also led women, family, and children groups with her church organization. Amy feels her greatest accomplishments are found in her home. She loves being the wife to her husband Drew and mother to her son Merik (7) and daughters Sophie (5) and Olivia (3 months). Amy loves being active and enjoys competing in sprint triathlons.



## Lisa Kamps

### TODDLER I

Lisa Kamps earned a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from the University of Arizona and a Master of Arts in Elementary Education from Northern Arizona University. She taught

second grade at St. Francis Xavier Elementary School in Phoenix for six years before becoming a stay-at-home mom to Charlie(19), Annie(17), Maggie(13) and Samantha(7). Her children attended Cross Roads Preschool and Kindergarten where she has been employed for six years. She taught the young three year old class and, for the past four years, has enjoyed teaching the "Time for Two" class(formerly known as Mom and Tot). She will also be co-teaching the Play and Learn class at Christ Church School beginning this fall. Lisa is an NCPG alum and is looking forward to her second year as an instructor. This organization served her so well in her early years as a mom. She is excited to share parenting tips and talk through the challenges of life with a toddler. In her free time, Lisa loves to travel, play tennis, take walks on the Bridle Path and play Scrabble. Her greatest joy is being with Spencer, her husband of twenty years, and having her whole family home together at the dinner table. She is looking forward to a great year!



## Debbie Hurst

### TODDLER II

Debbie is a native of Arizona. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Brigham Young University in Elementary Education with a minor in Child Development and Family Relations, and

her Ma.Ed from the University of Phoenix. Debbie has recently retired from the elementary classroom after twenty-nine years of teaching, specifically in grades one and three where she provided parenting tips and benchmarks of child growth and development in her weekly parent newsletters throughout the school year. She is currently under contract as adjunct faculty with Grand Canyon University in the College of Education, and received training this summer with the Rosemond Leadership Parenting Institute as a certified parent coach. As a teacher, Debbie has trained and mentored numerous interns, student teachers, and new faculty members in addition to serving on school advisement committees. She believes a nurturing environment containing love, leadership, communication, positive reinforcement, and mutual respect are paramount and fundamental in a child's life. Debbie has been married to her husband Craig for thirty-eight years and they are the proud parents of three children (including Amy Stewart, a fellow NCPG instructor) and six grandchildren. She enjoys traveling, cooking, playing the piano, and spending time with family!

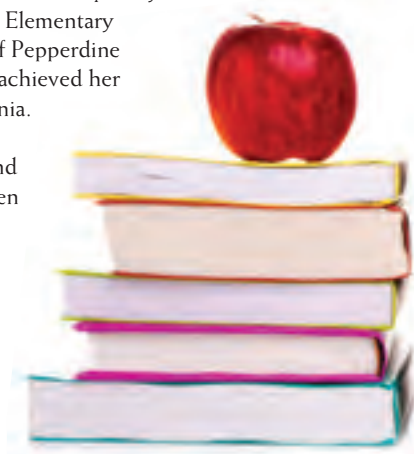


## Kristin Klecka

### TODDLER III

Kristin Klecka is an educator who has been working with children since the early 2000's. Trained in Elementary Education, she has worked full-time with two different grade

levels (fourth and second) for six years and has also substitute taught in grade levels K-6, including leading gifted/honors classes. Teaching in both California and Arizona, Kristin has a firm grasp of critical early years teaching skills and methods such as Core Knowledge. Kristin's course work at the University of Arizona resulted in a Bachelor of Arts in Family Studies and she subsequently obtained a Master's Degree in Elementary Education at the University of Pepperdine in Los Angeles, CA. She also achieved her teaching credential in California. But, her greatest accomplishment has been being a wife and full-time mom to three children ages 10, 8, and 6. They have taught her more about love and life than anything else. Kristin likes to cook, exercise, spend time with friends, and travel.







## Barb Grady

### PRE-SCHOOL I

Barb Grady begins her 25th year teaching for NCPG. She is a nationally certified counselor and certified teacher. In 1999, Barb began her business, Parenting-Plus, where she offers parenting classes, personal growth groups, individual consulting and life/parent coaching for both adults and children. Barb has taught preschool, Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades as well as high school and college. Barb has two daughters: Jody, who is a nurse and has two children (Carter 4 and Grady 3), and Annie, who recently finished her master's degree and is working as a farm to school program coordinator in California. Barb loves being an involved grandparent! She is delighted to return this year to share her passion and to motivate and inspire parents.



## Amy Guido

### PRESCHOOL II

Amy Guido is a masters prepared Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Her over 19 years of non-profit and for-profit behavioral health experience with children, teens and adults includes evaluation, case management, crisis intervention, counseling, program development, leadership and consulting with government and corporate clients. She's provided services in inpatient (Phoenix Children's Hospital), residential treatment centers, home, school, office and telephonic settings. She is comfortable addressing a variety of common parenting challenges. Her strengths include helping parents lead with intelligence, humility, awareness and playfulness. She is a grateful NCPG alumni and parent with her husband David and two sons ages 8 and 10. Privately, she enjoys walks with her goldendoodle, spending time with extended family and friends, school volunteerism, fitness and spirituality.



## Krystn Dale

### PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Krystn Dale was raised in North Central Phoenix and began her teaching career while still in high school teaching dance classes to preschoolers. She earned a Bachelor of Arts and an elementary teaching certificate while attending the University of San Francisco. After teaching Kindergarten in San Francisco for three years and Pre-K in New York for a year, she returned home and taught in the Washington Elementary School District for fifteen years holding positions as a K-1 and second grade teacher as well as librarian and Reading Specialist. She also worked for several years at Creative Bridges Cooperative Preschool as a Pre-K teacher. Krystn has been married to her husband Chris for twenty years and has 3 beautiful girls, Alexis, Avery and Zoe. When she has some free time she enjoys CrossFit, reading, meditation, gardening and raising backyard chickens.



## Jemeille Ackourey

### KINDERGARTEN

Jemeille is a Licensed Professional Counselor and has a master's degree in counseling. She provides services to individuals and families at her North Central Phoenix office. Jemeille served the Boys & Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Phoenix for 23 years before retiring in 2005 as their Vice President of Operations. Throughout her professional career, Jemeille has been volunteering her time and expertise at various community agencies, associations and schools where she trains

staff, educates students, mentors youth, and advises on program and organizational development. She has served on numerous educational and community boards and advisory committees.



## Susie Garlick

### ELEMENTARY 1

Susie Garlick earned a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from the University of Arizona and a Master of Arts in Professional Counseling from Ottawa University. She began her career teaching fifth grade followed by first grade before becoming a stay-at-home mom to her now 17-year-old son, 14-year-old daughter and 11-year-old daughter. It was during this time that she completed her masters degree while writing and publishing the book DiddleDots. After completing her masters Susie became a Licensed Associate Counselor in the State of Arizona and spent just under a year working as a counselor at CT Counseling Services in Downtown Phoenix. She soon realized her true passion was consulting with parents regarding their parenting challenges and created her business At the Parenting Place. In her free time, Susie enjoys journaling through art, practicing yoga, traveling, and spending time with Mike, her husband of twenty-one years, her children, and her two dogs.



## Michelle Cox

### ELEMENTARY 2

Michelle has been married for 20 years and is the mother of four teens. She loves to spend time with her family as they discover new places and explore the outdoors. Michelle is the founder of Build Family Connection and has been coaching and teaching parents for the last 7 years. Michelle graduated with a BS in Education from Northern Arizona University, completed "The Choice in Coaching: Arbinger Mastery Training for Coaches," a graduate of the Coachville School of Coaching, and is a PCC certified coach with the International Coaching Federation. Visit [www.buildfamilyconnection.com/about](http://www.buildfamilyconnection.com/about) to strengthen your family one moment at a time.



## Joan Sarin

### MIDDLE SCHOOL

Joan Sarin, M.S. received her bachelor's degree from Tulane University and her Master's in social psychology from the University of Pittsburgh. After busy years raising children while working in the corporate world, she became an EQ Educator and Stepfamily Coach. Since then Joan has taught at every level from preschool through college, focusing on emotional intelligence, positive psychology and personal development. Her twenty-plus years as a mom/stepmom have provided her with abundant opportunities to convert theory into practical experience. She consults in schools, training both students and parents to integrate emotional intelligence into their daily lives. Her private practice focuses on facilitating family members in making breakthroughs in their goals and relationships through a unique coaching method, the Truwell Technology. Joan is excited about her new ventures making practical and fun lessons in EQ available to both parents and teachers. She's enjoying spending more of her time in the White Mountains and having time to live mindfully. She will be teaching moms with kids from 5th to 7th grades.

# Class Descriptions

## PRE-INFANT

(Pregnant)

This class provides the foundation for a successful transition into motherhood. There are many new things to learn about a newborn's development, behaviors, and most importantly needs. Please feel free to bring your infant with you to class if you should have him or her during the school year!

## INFANT I

(0-6 months old)

All the infant "firsts" are shared and cherished in these important first six months. Bedtime routines are established and new foods are introduced. Please feel free to bring your infant (0-6 months old) to class with you!

## INFANT II

(7-13 months old)

The entirety of the first year is discussed and celebrated. The child is developing new behaviors and reaching milestones in crawling, walking and babbling.

## TODDLER I

(14-20 months)

Bye bye baby-hello toddler! Mobility and exploration are under way. In this class we cover discipline, napping, language development and social skills. We also discuss preschool readiness, preparing for siblings and potty training. The goal of this class is to help prepare parents for the many transitions that are a part of this stage of development.

## TODDLER II,

## TODDLER III NEW THIS YEAR!

(21-29 months)

Helping parents prepare and guide their children through the major transitions of this stage and year ahead. Preparing for preschool, potty training, moving from the crib to the bed, behavioral changes and social interaction are the goals of this class.

## PRE-SCHOOL I

(30-40 months)

This class focuses on the struggle for power between child and parent, providing useful and effective parenting strategies while respecting the child's need for independence. Sibling interaction and the family are discussed as well.

## PRE-SCHOOL II

(41-50 months)

This class devotes much time to children's social development, covering a variety of issues from anger management to conflict resolution to peer relationships. Additionally, topics in this class will include: establishing family rules, building self-confidence and self-reliance, and encouraging cognitive and physical development.

## PRE-K

(51-59 months)

Parents discuss and prepare for the next step into kindergarten, including but not limited to: choosing a school that meets their child's

and family's needs, learning math and reading tools that will enhance kindergarten success, and finding ways to encourage self-confidence and independence. Also, every class features take home crafts and recipes that focus on kindergarten readiness skills.

## KINDERGARTEN

(Enrolled in Kindergarten)

Come to this class for support, encouragement, and many laughs as we help moms and their children transition into elementary school.

Topics will focus on nurturing a child's autonomy, helping them set appropriate boundaries, fostering their awareness, and encouraging responsibility.

## ELEMENTARY I,

## ELEMENTARY II, NEW THIS YEAR!

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

(Grades 1-6)

NCPG has added elementary classes to help Valley parents navigate the challenges of parenting increasingly independent children. These classes will cover topics such as: how to partner with your child's teacher and school, bullying recognition and prevention, nutrition for learning, deepening your relationship with your child as he/she gets older, parenting in the digital age, raising your child to be an innovator, and encouraging autonomy.

# Class Progression

For 32 years, North Central Parenting Group has followed a class progression that has proven to be most beneficial to members and instructors. We group parents by their first child's age (as of Sept. 1), unless otherwise specified.

Parenting a 3 month old is much different than parenting an 11 month old, so classes for the "little ones" were created for a much smaller age range. As our children age, the developmental differences between a few months lessens, therefore the age range in classes widens. The result of this widened age range is that at preschool age, NCPG combines the two Toddler classes to progress through the rest of their NCPG years together.

Pre-Infant » Infant II » Toddler II » Preschool I\* » Preschool II » Pre-Kindergarten\*\* » Kindergarten » Elementary 1 » Elementary 2 » Middle School

Infant I » Toddler I » Toddler III\* » Preschool I\* » Pre-Kindergarten\*\* » Kindergarten » Elementary 1 » Elementary 2 » Middle School

\*Merge with class \*\*Merge with parents based on school year

Of course, there are several variables in play:

1. Progression may vary depending on your child's birth date. If your child is the oldest or youngest in a class, you may not follow the same progression as other members.
2. Member enrollment also affects class progression as the Board strives to have no class be too big or too small.

For questions about your class assignment, please contact [membership@ncpgaz.org](mailto:membership@ncpgaz.org). We can accommodate requests.

*The information provided by NCPG instructors not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.*









# Summer







# Smiles





# Classes & Board Meetings

## Class Schedule:

**8:30 a.m.**

Nursery opens

**9:00 – 9:40 a.m.**

Refreshments served in Nelson Hall

**9:45\*-11:30 a.m.**

Classes are held

**\*Teachers will start promptly at 9:45!**

**11:45 a.m.**

Nursery closes

**11:45 – 1:45 p.m.**

Pre-Infant Class

## Location:

The Church of the Beatitudes

555 W. Glendale Ave.

Phoenix 85021

## Class Dates:

September 7*	January 11
September 21	January 25 *
October 5*	February 8
October 19	February 22*
November 2*	March 22
November 16	April 5*
December 7*	April 19
	May 3*

\*Monthly *Parent Times* magazine distributed.

## Board Meeting Dates:

October 3	February 6
November 1	March 6
December 5	April 3
January 9	May 1

\*Meetings are at 6:30 p.m.

# Special Events

## NCPG & Grassroots Kitchen + Tap Fundraiser

September 25, 2016 – October 1, 2016

2119 E. Camelback Rd., Ste A21, Phoenix 85016

*Lunch through dinner, please visit [grassrootsaz.com](http://grassrootsaz.com) for exact hours*

Grassroots will donate 20% of all proceeds during the week long fundraiser in an effort to support the continued education efforts of NCPG. Bring your family and enjoy a great meal while helping NCPG.

## NCPG Uncorked!

Friday, October 7, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Valley Field Riding & Polo Club

2530 N. 64th St., Scottsdale 85257

You won't want to miss our fall happy hour fundraiser! We'll have red and white wine tastings, great food, as well as awesome raffle prizes. This is a great night to bring along friends outside of NCPG! Details on purchasing event tickets and raffle prizes to follow.

## Fall Family Festival

Saturday, October 22, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

All Saints' Episcopal Day School

6300 N. Central Ave. Phoenix 85012

Bring your kids dressed in their adorable Halloween costumes for all to see and join us for lots of Halloween fun! There will be a bounce house, kids' crafts, bubbles and a trackless space train. Lunch and ice cream will be provided for all!

# SAVE THE DATE!

## Saturday, April 1, 2017

# Spring Gala!

### 32nd Anniversary Celebration and Fundraiser

## PHOENIX COUNTRY CLUB

Join us for an evening full of food, fun, and a fabulous silent auction. This event helps fund NCPG activities, facilities, and instructors. Member tuition covers only a portion of our operating costs and we rely members' participation in this fundraiser. Save the date now!

Contact us at [fundraising@ncpgaz.org](mailto:fundraising@ncpgaz.org)  
if you have auction items or would like to join our committee to help with preparations.



# Mom's Night Out!

"Mom's Night Out" is a time for NCPG members of all classes to get together casually and unwind without their little ones in tow. Please feel free to attend any event that works for you, however, no event is mandatory.

September 14, 6-8 pm

20 Highland Tavern, Whole Foods Market  
4701 N. 20th St., Phoenix, AZ 85016

January 18, 6-8 pm

Artistic Impressions by Mara  
3120 N. 44th St., Phoenix, AZ 85018

April 26, 6-8 pm

20 Highland Tavern, Whole Foods Market  
4701 N. 20th St., Phoenix, AZ 85016

*\*NCPG is not "hosting" the Mom's Night Outs.*

# NCPG Play Dates



**October 12 • The Orchard Splash Pad • 3:30-5:00 pm**

7120 N. 12th St. Phoenix 85020

Pack your kids' swimsuits and sunscreen and let them play in the splash pad while spending the afternoon with NCPG. Hosted by NCPG with light appetizers provided, and an additional discounted menu with food and beverage options will be available.

**November 30 • Arcadia Park • 3:30-5:00 pm**

3402 N. 56th St., Phoenix 85018

The weather will be amazing and the company even better. Join us for an afternoon of family fun at one of our favorite neighborhood parks!

**February 1 • Kachina Park • 3:30-5:00 pm**

4304 E. Campbell Ave., Phoenix 85018

Come play with us underneath the shaded jungle gym for a fun-filled afternoon. Bonus tip: LGO is just down the street making it a super convenient night to not cook dinner!

**March 29 • Ready, Set, Play • 10:00 am-12:00 pm**

(Paradise Valley Mall, near Chomplies & Dillards)

4568 E. Cactus Rd., Phoenix, 85032

Ready, Set, Play will be closed for all non-NCPG members during these 2 hours. NCPG will pay all entrance fees and provide snacks for the kids. Invitations will be sent out closer to the date. We hope to see all your kids there!

If you have any questions regarding the play dates, please contact [specialevents@ncpgaz.org](mailto:specialevents@ncpgaz.org).



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# Meet the Board



## Caroline Keating

Treasurer

### Spouse/Children Names:

Jim (spouse), Jack (4) and Hank (2)

**NCPG Class:** Preschool II

**Best thing about being a mom...**  
the cuddles, love and sloppy kisses.

**I stay sane by...** Having plenty of date nights and mom's night outs.

**People might not know that I...** lived on the Oregon coast for the past year.

**Come to me for...** boy mom conversation over cocktails.



## Ashley Blalock

President

### Spouse/Children Names:

Tucker (spouse), Cash (2)

**NCPG Class:** Toddler III

**Best thing about being a mom...**  
being a mom is hands down the hardest job I have ever loved. It's like having

a piece of your heart running around outside of your body. Watching my son experience the world and all that life has to offer is humbling and magical. It has also taught me to forgive myself for my mistakes, because inevitably I messed up somewhere (or lots of "somewheres") throughout the day!

**I stay sane by...** starting my morning working out and using the Camelback Village day care! It takes a village to raise a child (pun intended), and I'm not too proud to ask for help and take breaks when I need them. Giving myself that time in the morning makes me a better mom and wife throughout the day. I am also lucky to have an amazing support system of friends I've met through NCPG that I can complain to on a regular basis! I also regularly drink too much wine, have date nights with my husband, and time with my family and friends.

**People might not know that I...** am an AVID dancer. I will quite literally dance any night away and routinely have dance parties during the day with my son at home. I love to have a good time and enjoy life to the fullest (however, that's not exactly a secret).

**Come to me for...** funny stories. I've got them in spades! My life has proven to be quite comical, and my son has a flare for the dramatic (not sure where that came from). I love to entertain people with Cash-tales. I am also a great listener and love to help people whenever I can.



## Lindsay Perry

Vice President

### Spouse/Children Names:

Kris (Spouse), Taylor (10) and Georgia (1)

**NCPG Class:** Toddler I

**Best thing about being a mom...**  
the unconditional love. A mother's love for her child is like nothing else in the world.

**I stay sane by...** taking time for me, spending time with great girlfriends, date nights and laughing.

**People might not know that I...** am fascinated by the world of science and medicine. It's my go-to reading at night.

**Come to me for...** strong willed kids. I've got one and in the last 10 years I've learned that being a parent is hard work and being a parent to a strong willed child is extra hard work. So, when you find yourself in negotiations with a three foot tall dictator, remember that research says your child will grow up to be a successful adult. Until then come to me for some survival tips to get you there.



## Jenna Hilton

Treasurer Assistant

### Spouse/Children Names:

Zach (spouse), Royce (2) and Kennedy (7 months)

**NCPG Class:** Preschool I

**Best thing about being a mom...**  
morning cuddles, giggles, seeing your/your spouse's normal tendencies reen-

acted by your toddler, and unprovoked dance parties.

**I stay sane by...** going to the Montelucia for yoga and pedicures (highly recommend if you haven't tried).

**People might not know that I...** have worked as a PA for seven years at a Family Practice in Gilbert.

**Come to me for...** advice on derm rashes, reactions, and lesions—love!



## Rebecca Hogan

Membership Co-Director

### Spouse/Children Names:

Kevin (spouse), and twins Kate and Connor (2)

**NCPG Class:** Toddler III

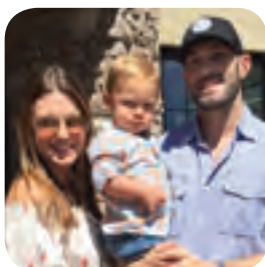
**Best thing about being a mom...**  
seeing my kids laugh, play, and interact everyday. They make my life more full

and I feel so lucky to be a mom to happy healthy kids.

**I stay sane by...** having lots of mom friends and playdates. A glass of wine and some reality TV helps too.

**People might not know that I...** am a pediatric nurse practitioner and work at Phoenix Children's Hospital 2 days a week. Hopefully I only ever have to see your kids for well visits :)

**Come to me for...** being a mom to twins and twin life; any infertility issues.



## Lindsey Bates

Membership Co-Director

### Spouse/Children's Names:

Austin (spouse), Brody (2)

**NCPG Class:** Toddler III

**Best thing about being a Mom...**  
being able to watch this tiny human you've created grow, learn and develop daily. Also nothing compares to the

unconditional love and bond between Mother and child.



**I stay sane by...** wine, girlfriends and binge watching real housewives during nap time.

**People might not know that I...** love sweets! And if it was socially accepted I would eat dessert for every meal.

**Come to me for...** toddler hot spots. I've got an active toddler so we are always out and about checking out new spots and things to do.



## Meredith Christensen

Education Co-Director

### Spouse/Children's Names:

Mitch (spouse), Caroline (2 1/2), Logan (5 months)

**NCPG class:** Preschool I

**Best thing about being a Mom...** feeling & giving unconditional love and endless baby snuggles! Nothing sweeter!

**I stay sane by...** hiking, traveling, date nights with Mitch, Pinterest, organizing and wine (of course)

**People might not know that I...** worked in the non-profit world for 7 years and would love to get my masters degree in the near future.

**Come to me for...** we are potty training Caroline and sleep training Logan so please come to me if you need support, a shoulder to cry on or a glass of wine....I feel your pain!



## Chelsea Kunde

Education Co-Director

### Spouse/Children's Names:

Josh (spouse), Harper (2.5 years)

**NCPG class:** Preschool I

### Best thing about being a Mom...

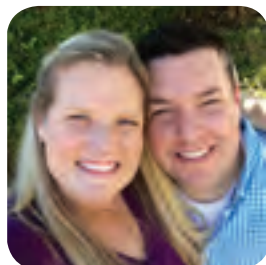
I love laughing with my daughter. She is hilarious. But most of all, the best thing is learning to pause and enjoy the little

things. Like bubbles, who knew how amazing bubbles are? ; )

**I stay sane by...** pilates, chatting with girlfriends, date nights and wine ;)

**People might not know that I...** am obsessed with 90s music. 90s on 9 and Howard Stern are played around the clock in my car (okay I lied, sometimes the Frozen soundtrack and Kidz bop sneak in there).

**Come to me for...** any help with sleep or discipline consultation. My company Building Blocks ([www.buildingblocksaz.org](http://www.buildingblocksaz.org)) specializes in customized loving family solutions.



## Carole Anne Cook

Childcare Co-Director

### Spouse/Children's Names:

Jeff (spouse), (8 1/2) and Watts (2). They are 6 1/2 years apart and I would not change it for anything. My husband and I have been married for 12 pretty awesome years!

**NCPG class:** Toddler III  
(2nd time's a charm)

**Best thing about being a Mom...** LEARNING. I learn every day. I learn to see normal everyday things through the eyes of the innocent. I learn to conquer my own fears, so I may teach them how it is done. I learn to slow down because these truly are the best days of my life. I learn, so I may teach. Being a Mom is truly the greatest gift I could have ever been given and do not deserve.

**I stay sane by ...** online/offline Shopping (I'm not picky), drinking Diet Coke, and laughing. I do a heck of a lot of laughing.

**People might not know that I...** danced in the Opening Ceremonies of

the Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta, circa 1996. It was as amazing as it sounds! One of those memories you hope to never forget.

**Come to me for...** all things Cloth Diapering. I am in LOVE with cloth and everything that goes with it. Well, not everything. ;)



## Dana Holt

Childcare Co-Director

### Spouse/Children's Names:

David (spouse), Nora (2) and Lucy (3 months)

**NCPG class:** Toddler III

### Best thing about being a Mom...

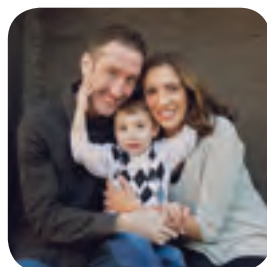
watching my daughter grow into a confident, independent, loving little person.

**I stay sane by...** going to see live music.

My husband and I have always been big music and concert junkies.

**People might not know that I...** love to travel and would go anywhere given the chance. I have visited every continent except Antarctica, although that's next on my list.

**Come to me for...** recommendations on children's books. Being a former elementary school teacher, I think I've read and collected enough to start a small library!



## Laurie Ball

Communications Co-Director

### Children (and ages)/Spouse:

Dave (spouse), Evan (2)

**NCPG class:** Preschool I

### Best thing about being a Mom...

the amount of love I get from my son each day and how much he can make me laugh over the simplest things. He sure

has taught me to enjoy the simple things in life as we shouldn't take anything for granted.

**I stay sane by...** having a MNO (Mom's Night Out) once a week and drinking wine with my cheese as I watch crime shows on TV.

**People might not know that I...** I Love extreme sports and spent time in college racing cars.

**Come to me for...** if you need swim lessons, if you want to grab a glass of wine, or if you want to hit up a local event.



## Laura Beardsley

Communications Co-Director

### Spouse/Children's Names:

Andrew (spouse), Austin (3) and Eliza (7 months)

**NCPG class:** Preschool II

### Best thing about being a Mom...

there are so many things. One of my favorites however, is when my son laughs really hard. It's like his whole face smiles

along with him and it just lights me up inside. I also love seeing my son make my daughter laugh, or when they interact in a positive way. Those moments seem to make all the difficult times melt away.

**I stay sane by...** scheduling "me" time each week and most recently, playing music in the morning while I make breakfast and get into the day with my kids. For some reason, music in the morning puts me in a great mood and sets me up for a good day. Try it!

**People might not know that I...** am not a fan of the sun. I think it's secretly trying to kill us all and we must defend ourselves accordingly.

**Come to me for...** info on ear infections and tubes or picky eaters!

(continued on next page)



## Nathalie Estes

Special Events Co-Director

### Spouse/Children's Names:

Shawn (spouse), Avery (2), Jackson (stepson, 13) and Cody (stepson, 12)

NCPG Class: Toddler III

### Best thing about being a Mom...

hearing my daughter bust out laughing is the best sound EVER. I just want to

bottle up her little voice and laugh so I can hear it forever.

**I stay sane by...** taking time to myself, yoga, spin, date nights...and plenty of wine.

**People might not know that I...** teach spin at Studio 360. Come take my class sometime!!

**Come to me for...** ideas on fun places around the valley to go with your baby or toddler! I am always looking for new spots to check out with the little ones.



## Jessica Lewis

Special Events Co-Director

### Spouse/Children's Names:

Tom (spouse), Lexi (2)

NCPG class: Toddler III

### Best thing about being a Mom...

hearing your child say I Love You!  
And morning snuggles.

**I stay sane by...** sane?! J/K. Coffee, spa

days with my wonderful mom friends, lots of wine, and babysitters...not necessarily in that order. :)

**People might not know that I...** grew up in Des Moines, Iowa, am obsessed with my puppy, Teddy, and once did a choreographed dance-off to MC Hammer with my brother at my wedding...we're crazy! Oh, and I used to be cool.

**Come to me for...** a night out for wine....I'm always down!



## Amy Forsythe

Social Co-Director

### Spouse/Children's Names:

Warren (spouse), Connor (stepson, 15), Elise (4) and Savannah (2)

NCPG Class: Preschool II

### Best thing about being a Mom...

the feeling of love I have for my kids is unparalleled. It's been exceptional

watching them learn and grow into such awesome little people.

**I stay sane by...** having a great support system. NCPG has a nice hand in that. Exercise, wine, and Bravo are pretty helpful too :)

**People might not know that I...** was a realtor, then went back to school to teach. I stay home now, but would love to study nutrition and apply that to working with kids again someday.

**Come to me for...** to feel better about your day. I've made every mistake. Don't learn from your own mistakes when you can learn from mine!



## Jessica Phipps

Social Co-Director

### Spouse/Children's Names:

Colin (spouse), Harlow (2) and Ainsley (3 months)

NCPG class: Toddler III

### Best thing about being a Mom...

every part of it...okay, well most of it.

The tiny voice asking for "help" or to

"hold me, mama," and especially the "I love you's." The snuggles, when I can catch them, and the fun things she does each day to show she really is growing into a fun, respectable, polite human being.

**I stay sane by...** scheduling time with my husband and my girlfriends away from my girls. Delicious food and wine play a big part as well!

**People might not know that I...** grew up on spending my summers on the lake. I love skiing, wakeboarding, tubing and anything else on the water.

**Come to me for...** anything! Being a parent is the hardest thing ever and we are all in this together, good or bad, I can be the support you need. You are an amazing mama already if you are here trying to learn, don't forget that!!



## Teana Wagner

Public Relations Director

### Spouse/Children's Names:

Ashton (4)

NCPG class: Pre-K

### Best thing about being a Mom...

there is nothing that compares to looking at someone who looks just like you. Same mad expressions, happy

expressions and even the expressions you forgot you had! It's a bitter sweet feeling but it sure does make you realize how amazing our bodies and reproduction are!

**I stay sane by...** focusing on my "happy place," as Barb calls it. In my happy place, I am alone. Even though I am a twin and I've always had someone by my side even in the womb, I actually prefer to be alone at certain times. Getting time alone is my savior and I use that time to focus on myself, because that is what makes me happy, improving myself as a person, mother, wife and friend. Everyone has a "happy place," and we tend to lose it when we become mothers, focusing all our energy on the little ones. During Barb's class, we focused on getting back to our "happy place".

**People might not know that I...** am living in semi-remission from a neuromuscular illness called Myasthenia Gravis. I am grateful everyday that I get to live a normal life. I was diagnosed at age 15 and could not talk, walk or use my muscles normally. I have had good days and bad days being a mom living with MG, but it has also given me an appreciation for the abilities I am given everyday because it can all be taken away again at any moment.



## Tiffany Westlie Pondelik

Fundraising Co-Director

### Spouse/Children's Names:

Miles (Spouse), Cassie 4, and Heidi (1 in October)

NCPG Class: Pre-K

### Best thing about being a Mom...

learning how to slow down and enjoy the little things.

**I stay sane by...** playing tennis, planning trips, dance parties with my girls.

**People might not know that I...** used to sing at a Norwegian Heritage Festival as a kid.

**Come to me for...** advice on traveling with dogs and babies and the best glass of wine to follow a hard day of parenting.





## Pele Fischer

Fundraising Co-Director

**Spouse/Children Names:**

Nic (spouse), Court (1 1/2)

**NCPG Class:** Toddler II

**Best thing about being a Mom...**

precious family time—being silly, laughing, singing, dancing, playing, reading and just being together!

**I stay sane by...** deep breaths, fresh air, venting and vino!

**People might not know that I...** love the outdoors! Hiking, skiing, anyone?

**Come to me for...** support for busy moms struggling to find balance (me!), legal questions and Arizona politics!



## Kendall Chester

Fundraising Co-Director

**Spouse/Children's Names:**

Tyler (spouse), Bradley (18 months)

**NCPG Class:** Toddler II

**Best thing about being a Mom...**

the moment when my son comes racing across the room to wrap me in a bear hug. To know true unconditional love for

and from your child makes all of the challenges worthwhile.

**I stay sane by...** working part-time, enjoying monthly book club and mom's nights, and the occasional solo trip to Target (the holy grail of motherhood).

**People might not know that I...** am petrified of bears, hate the sound of people eating, and have a strong preference for lists of three.

**Come to me for:**... couponing tips -- I love getting a deal!



## Kelly Krueger

Sponsorship/Advertising Co-Director

**Spouse/Children Names:**

Mark (spouse), Kennedy (2 1/2) and a little boy due in September

**NCPG Class:** Preschool I

**Best thing about being a Mom...**

the giggles, hugs and kisses. I really did not know I could love someone

so much.

**I stay sane by...** date nights with my hubby and staying busy with activities for Kennedy throughout the week.

**People might not know that...** I love to dance. I started dancing when I was 4 years old and danced competitively all the way through high school and college.

**Come to me for...** information on plagiocephaly. My daughter had to wear a cranial band for 4 months starting at 5 months old.



## Sara Snyder

Sponsorship/Advertising Co-Director

**Spouse/Children's Names:**

Jeremy (spouse), Lila (2) and baby #2 due in October!

**NCPG class:** Prechool I

**Best thing about being a Mom...**

no matter how exhausted you are, a smile/hug/kiss from your child makes

it all worth it!

**I stay sane by...** wine, Mom's Night Outs, Yoga, Playdates...and more wine!

**People might not know that I...** French is my first language, I grew up in Hong Kong and Singapore and have a super brief cameo in Sweet Home Alabama!

**Come to me for...** any event/party planning needs! I recently launched my events company (Simply Stunning Events: [www.eventsss.com](http://www.eventsss.com)) which I am super excited about!



## Sarah Wolfswinkel

Sponsorship/Advertising Co-Director

**Spouse/Children's Names:**

Ashton (spouse), Vivienne (2), Elizabeth (1)

**NCPG class:** Preschool I

**Best thing about being a Mom...**

having fun with my kids brings out the kid in me.

**I stay sane by...** planning ahead, over a glass of wine.

**People might not know that I...** have been skydiving.

**Come to me for...** a killer margarita that my husband Ashton perfected this summer.



## Kelly Vasbinder

Alternate Director

**Spouse/Children's Names:**

Jordan (spouse), twins Jamie & Eva (3 1/2) and Annie (12 weeks)

**NCPG class:** Preschool II

**Best thing about being a Mom...**

with the twins, it's their developing sense of humor, and how they manage to sur-

prise me everyday. With our new baby girl, it's everything.

She is our "happy surprise" and last hurrah, so we are truly enjoying every minute.

**I stay sane by...** going out (or even just texting) with my fellow mom friends, date nights with my husband, strong coffee, a big glass of wine and a long run with great music.

**People might not know that I...** lived in Vail, CO for 5 years after college.

**Come to me for...** anything IVF related, twin questions or to gossip about celebrities.

## We Want Your Pictures!

Please send all birth announcements, cute pictures of NCPG kids and parents, and professional photos to be considered for the front cover to:

[communications@ncpgaz.org](mailto:communications@ncpgaz.org) (hi-res please!)



# NEW ARRIVALS!



**Anne Margaret Vasbinder**  
May 13, 2016  
8 lbs 3 oz, 21 inches  
Brother: James (3 1/2) and Sister:  
Geneva (3 1/2), Parents: Kelly & Jordan



**Ainsley May Phipps**  
June 9, 2016  
7 lbs 7 oz, 21 1/4 inches  
Sister: Harlow (2)  
Parents: Colin & Jessica



**Karis Anne Nelson**  
June 20, 2016  
7 lbs 2 oz, 20 1/4 inches  
Brother: Carter (2)  
Parents: Jared & Jennifer



**Burke O'Malley Fillion**  
June 20, 2016  
6 lbs 14 oz, 19 1/2 inches  
Sister: Madeleine (2 1/2)  
Parents: Andy & Colleen



**Duke John Klingman**  
July 2, 2016  
7 lbs 15 oz, 19 inches  
Sister: Anoka Jay (2)  
Parents: Gregor & Heidi-Jo



**Lucy Doreen Holt**  
July 22, 2016  
7 lbs 6 oz, 20 1/2 inches  
Sister: Nora (2)  
Parents: Dana & David



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• Teenie's	(2 by Sep 1 - Diapers Welcome)	3 Day
• Mini's	(2 by Apr 30)	2, 3 or 5 Day
• Three's	(3 by Aug 31)	2, 3 or 5 Day
• Four's/Pre-K	(4 by Aug 31)	4 or 5 Day
• Progressive Pre-K	(5 by Dec 31)	5 Day

**Classes include:**

- Standard 4-Hour Day (9am-1pm)
- Daily Nutritious Snack
- Daily Lunchtime with Teachers
- Music, Spanish and ACTIVE Classes
- Fun-Filled Community Traditions


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# Cheesy Veggie Quinoa Bites

Source:  
Brienne, Cupcakes & Kale Chips  
[www.cupcakesandkalechips.com](http://www.cupcakesandkalechips.com)

Veggies, protein and grains packed into fun, cheesy tots perfect for little fingers to grab and munch on!

Christy Bidwill, NCPG mom, baked up these delicious bites for our play and learn class and they turned out so fabulous that we wanted to share the recipe with you. Christy typically makes them without cheese and they still turn out great. The veggie mixture she uses contains sautéed zucchini, yellow squash, orange bell pepper and yellow bell pepper with dried rosemary and thyme plus some roasted cauliflower. She has even made it even easier by using a package of thawed peas, carrots and corn. Give them a try, as they were a hit with the kids and the adults.



## Ingredients:

- 1 cup cooked and cooled quinoa
- 1 cup (about 4 oz.) shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 cup chopped vegetables cooked {steamed, roasted, etc}
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 egg

## Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray mini muffin pan with cooking spray or oil.
2. Add all of the ingredients to a bowl and mix until thoroughly combined.
3. Divide the mixture evenly between mini muffin pan cups and press down to pack.
4. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown and crispy.

# Chalk Bombs

Source: [www.parents.com](http://www.parents.com)

A smash hit! Kids will have a blast with this chalk-bomb idea.

## Make it:

1. You need to make your washable-chalk paint mixture first or you can purchase chalk paint. To make it yourself, simply mix 1 cup of water, 2 tablespoons of cornstarch, and a few drops of food coloring.
2. Stretch the water balloons first to make them easier to fill.
3. Use a clean soap dispenser pump (the bigger the better) to fill the water balloons with the washable-chalk paint mixture you made.
4. Finally have your child draw targets on the ground with chalk or just let him go wild. Fire away!



If you don't have time to make them you can purchase them at Amazon, just search **Lanard Chalk Bombs**, and don't forget to use **AmazonSmile** so NCPG gets a donation.



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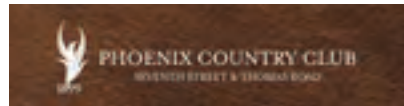
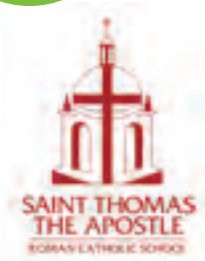
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