



Free Family Workshops & Parent Pages Newsletter October 2026

[Read the Parent Pages Newsletter](#)

Baby Leaders Apply now to be part of PPMD's Baby LEADers training program. This FREE, virtual training is for families of children ages birth-5 whose child has a suspected or diagnosed developmental delay or disability. The program includes topics such as: Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individualized Education Program (IEP), Transition at age 3, Communication and conflict resolution, Leadership and advocacy. Participants must be able to attend all sessions plus a mandatory orientation session. **Application is due October 16.** Orientation: October 20, 12-1 or 7-8 p.m. **5 Virtual series sessions: Saturdays: 9:30 am - 12:00 p.m. October 31, November 7, 14, 21, December 5** For more information, visit the [Baby LEADers: HoCo Fall 2026 Cohort Application](#)

Managing Parenting Frustration

Parenting can be incredibly rewarding, but it also brings stressful moments—especially when children test limits or have big emotions. It's natural to feel overwhelmed at times. Learn practical strategies to manage frustration, stay calm in challenging situations, and respond in ways that support both you and your child. Come with your questions and leave with tools, skills, and resources to help you feel more confident and in control during tough parenting moments.

Thursday, October 15, 1 p.m. Free virtual workshop

Play & Learn To celebrate Walktober we will play, explore and learn together outside! In this interactive session, children and caregivers will discover how everyday play builds important skills for learning and development—while meeting and connecting with other families. Explore hands-on activity stations inspired by The Basics—simple, science-backed ways to support your child's development. As children play, they'll practice skills like talking, counting, moving, exploring, and problem-solving. Learn easy, fun ideas to use at home to turn everyday moments into opportunities for learning and connection. For children ages 1–5 and their caregivers. **Monday, October 19, 10 - 11:30 a.m. Free at Blandair Park**

To request this information in an alternate format, or accommodations to participate in these programs, email children@howardcountymd.gov or call the CARE Line, 410-313-CARE(2273) (voice/relay).

Howard County Office of Children and Families

<https://bit.ly/HoCo-FamilyEngagement>



**To visit our website and
register, scan the QR code**

Newsletter

Click on Parent Pages

www.howardcountymd.gov/parentpages

**For questions or assistance with
registering, call 410-313-2273
(voice/ relay) or email
children@howardcountymd.gov**

**Programming questions,
email Lisa Rhodes at
lrhodes@howardcountymd.gov**

Ready, Set, Safe: Parental Controls Made Easy

This in-person workshop will cover the ins and outs of how to navigate and maximize parental controls on a variety of devices. We'll cover tips for keeping your children safe in cyberspace, like turning on safe browsing in popular apps, how to set up time, word and site limitations, and how to set your family up for early security success when getting online. Opportunities for optional one-on-one assistance will be available after the presentation. Feel free to bring a charged device you are comfortable navigating to class!

Saturday, October 24, 10 a.m. to noon, East Columbia 50+ Center

Creating a Calming Area in Your Home Discover the benefits of having a designated calming corner in your home—a peaceful space where your child can practice self-regulation and manage big emotions. Learn how calming areas support emotional development and walk away with practical tools and ideas to create your own calming corner at home. Help your child build healthy coping skills in a comforting, supportive environment! **Monday, October 26, 6:30 p.m. Free virtual workshop**

Helping Children Transition Between Activities For some children transitions—such as moving from outside play to dinner or from playtime to bedtime—can often be challenging and may lead to frustration or difficult behaviors. In this workshop, you'll learn practical strategies to help children understand and anticipate what's coming next, making transitions smoother, calmer, and more successful for the whole family.

Wednesday, October 28, 6:30 p.m. Free virtual workshop

Building Parenting Plans to Create Calm During the Holidays

The holiday season often brings added pressure for co-parents, but a clear parenting plan can keep everyone on the same page. In this workshop, divorce and co-parenting mediator, coach, and attorney Allison McFadden will share practical strategies for creating parenting plans that cover day-to-day routines while also addressing how to create clarity around the holidays to minimize conflict. Whether you're drafting a new plan or fine-tuning an existing one, you'll leave with tools to reduce stress, support your children, and stay focused on what matters most.

Wednesday, November 4, 7 p.m. Free virtual workshop

The Howard County Family Support Center (FSC) offers community-based programs for parents and caregivers of children age birth to five. Located at 9790 Patuxent Woods Drive in Columbia, FSC programs highlight child development, parent education and health information. Upcoming programming below. For more information on programming, contact Ashton Sullivan, asullivan@howardcountymd.gov, 410-313-1453 (voice/relay)

Drop-in Play Group: Children and their families are invited to explore and play at our Family Support Center! Parents must stay with their children. This is a great opportunity for children to meet new friends and parents to network! **Friday October 16, 10 – 11:30 a.m. [Register here](#)**

The Basics Howard County | The Basics Insights text messaging

Research shows that 90% of brain growth happens by age five. The Basics provide five simple things parents can do to make the most of these early years. Parents in Howard County can receive free tips directly to their phone to support their child by [signing up](#) for **Basics Insights**. These weekly text messages provide suggestions based on your child's developmental stage, from birth to five (available in English or Spanish). [Learn more at The Basics Howard County webpage.](#)