

# Townhaller



## *Virtual Active Parenting Sessions*

**SARAH MCCULLY, OCPS**

A **free** virtual parenting group is starting soon! Townhall II will be facilitating Active Parenting on Wednesday evenings (February 17, 24, March 3, and March 10) from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. Upon registering, participants will receive a link to join the live sessions. During these sessions you will hear presentations on Parenting Styles, Discipline, Character Building, Communication and Self-Care. Children ages 4 – 12 will also be provided with a link to live sessions for fun discussions and activities.

Parents/Caregivers that attend 3 of the 4 sessions will receive a \$25 gift card to Sheetz and parents/caregivers attending all 4 sessions will also receive a \$25 gift card to Giant Eagle. Free program books and workbooks will be mailed out to all participants.

**Registration is necessary. Please email Sarah McCully at [sarahmc@townhall2.com](mailto:sarahmc@townhall2.com) to register.**

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# Happenings this Month

## **Teen Dating Awareness Month**

Teen dating violence (TDV) is common and affects millions of teens each year in the U.S.

### ***Did you know?***

- Nearly 1 in 11 female and approximately 1 in 15 male high school students report having experienced physical dating violence in the last year.
- About 1 in 9 female and 1 in 36 male high school students report having experienced sexual dating violence in the last year.

TDV can lead to depression, anxiety, substance use/abuse, antisocial behaviors, and thoughts of suicide. So, what can we do to help stop TDV? We can educate youth on safe and healthy relationships, create protective environments at home, in the school, and throughout the community, and support survivors to increase their safety and lessen harm. (CDC)

Check out more information [here](#).

### **February 4th:**

#### **National Thank a Mail Carrier Day**

##### **Fun Mail Facts:**

- The first organized mail service started in 1775 in America.
- Stamps were invented in 1847.
- Zip Codes started in 1963.

##### **Ways to show your mail carrier appreciation:**

- Leave a thank you note in the mailbox for them!
- Thank them in person for their service!
- Leave them a gift that shows that you appreciate them like chocolates, a gift card, or even something tasty to drink for the rest of their ride!

### **February 14th:**



### **February 17th:**

#### **National Random Acts of Kindness Day**

**“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.” (Aesop)**

Celebrate by paying for a stranger's coffee or meal. leave a kind note for someone, donate clothes or food to local shelters, send a thank you note to essential employees, send someone a gift or just give someone a compliment!

# *Bring the Classroom Party to Your House for Valentine's Day*

SARAH MCCULLY, OCPS

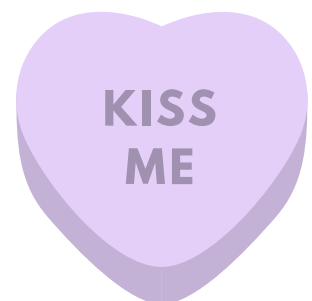
As with everything this year, we have to be creative about Valentine's Day with our children.

Even if your child is learning in person, most classroom parties are being cancelled or drastically altered. There are so many ways that families can bring the fun of a classroom Valentine's Day party to their homes. Here are some ideas for a festive at home party!

**1. Sidewalk Chalk Hearts** – Use sidewalk chalk to draw colorful hearts and meaningful messages on your front porch, sidewalk and driveway. These pictures and drawings can be something you surprise your kids (or even your significant other) with in the morning or it can be something that you do with your kids to help cheer up the neighborhood and spread the love. You can also make this a mobile valentine idea and pack the family up in the car and chalk up the driveways of grandparents, and other family members as well as friends!

**2. Valentine's Day Science** – Put some love into science experiments with the use of the staple of Valentine's Day, the conversation heart!

- *The Color of Love:* For this experiment, you will need 4 clear glasses, hot water and a bag of conversation hearts. Have your child separate the hearts by color. Fill the glasses with 1 cup of hot water. Make sure that the adult does the pouring and be careful about touching the glasses as they can be hot. Assign a color to each glass and drop 2 hearts of that color into the water. Have your child stir until the heart is dissolved. The water will turn a very vibrant color...even more vibrant than the color the heart was before dissolving!
- *Dancing Hearts:* For this experiment you will need a clear glass, 4 Alka-Seltzer tablets, 1 cup sparkling water (this is optional but does provide some extra dance energy...you can also use regular tap water) and conversation hearts. Crumble the Alka-Seltzer tablets and put in the bottom of the glass. Have your child choose a handful of their favorite conversation hearts and place them on top of the Alka-Seltzer tablets. Then, pour 1 cup of sparkling water (or 1 cup of the regular tap water) in the glass and watch those hearts dance!



**3. Heart Shaped Pizza** – Cut your pizza dough in the shape of a heart and have the kids put on the toppings! You can make one big pizza or mini pizzas with the use of a 4” heart shaped cookie cutter for the dough! You can get really ambitious and use a 1” heart shaped cookie cutter to cut the pieces of pepperoni into hearts too!



**4. Cupid Floats** – This recipe is for one serving so you will need enough glasses for all the members of your household who would like to have a float! Single serving ingredients include: one scoop of vanilla ice-cream, 8 ounces of cherry soda, and one piece of red licorice. Add a scoop (or get crazy and add 2 scoops) of vanilla ice cream to your glass. Fill the cup with the cherry soda (caution...it will be very foamy). Cut each end off of 1 strand of red licorice and put it into the cup to use as a straw. It will be a very pretty pink and white striped color!! Perfect for Cupid!

**5. Minute to Win It Games with Conversation Hearts** – Get the most out of that dollar purchase and use those conversation hearts to play minute to win it games. For example, you can play Heart Stack. Set a timer for one minute and have the players in your house start stacking the hearts. See who gets the highest! Once they get a certain height they start falling over so this one can get frustrating! You could also have a Heart Relay. You will need 4 cups and 2 spoons for this one. Fill 2 cups with conversation hearts and put them at one end of the room. Put the empty cups a few feet away. The participants have one minute to move as many hearts from the full cup into the empty cup using only a spoon. At the end of the minute, the person or team fills their empty cup the highest wins!

**6. Cupid's Arrow Practice** – You will need a piece of poster board (or anything you can find around the house...pieces of cardboard cut from boxes work well too), straws, Q-tips and markers or crayons. Cut out three large hearts of varying sizes into your poster board. Give each heart a points amount (large one is worth 10 pts, smallest worth 50 pts). Mark those points on the board. Give your child (or the adult) a straw and a Q-tip. Put the Q-tip in one end of the straw and have the player aim that end of the straw toward the poster board and blow the straw from the other end to try and shoot the Q-tip through one of the heart holes! Mark how many points they get and see who in your family is the best at playing Cupid!







# Love is in the Air....Or is it?

TIFFANY MARTIN, BS

The Month of February is known for many holidays, but one holiday that stands out for the lovers is Valentine's Day. Valentine's Day, as we all know, is a romantic time for couples as they celebrate their relationships with gifts, vacations and marriage proposals. On this day, social media is filled with couples posting gifts, posing with their significant other, looking happy and showing as if their relationship is healthy. Unfortunately, some of these relationships are not as healthy as they seem.

Here are a few characteristics you should look for that can determine the health of your relationship:

## Healthy Relationships

*Compliment:* They help you feel good about you.

*Forgive:* They don't hold on to your faults.

*Appreciates Partner:* Loves what you do for them and reciprocates.

*Respect:* Honors your being, how you feel and what you need.

## Unhealthy Relationships

*Criticize:* nothing you do is right.

*Hold grudges:* No forgiveness at all. Will bring up old offenses.

*Take Advantage:* Expects you to do for them and won't/don't care about your needs.

*Disrespect:* Calls you names, lets others talk about you, don't care about you.

Although many relationships are different and most can stand the test of time, not all relationships are red hearts and pink bows. So, if you possibly find yourself in an unhealthy relationship here are a few things you can do:

1. **Recognize the toxic traits early.** The earlier you can recognize when/if the relationship is toxic, the earlier you can determine if the relationship is worth saving.
2. If you recognize the traits and the relationship cannot be salvaged, **Don't Wait for them to Change.** We often think that our love is powerful enough to change a person. A person changes because they take the responsibility to change.
3. **Seek Outside Help/Support.** Sometimes we are too close to the problem to know there is an issue. Try a close friend, family member or a therapist. Seeking outside help could better help you understand if the relationship is unhealthy.
4. **Get out as quick as possible.** Don't wait to see if the relationship will get better if the behavior doesn't change. Even though you set boundaries in the beginning of the relationship, set boundaries after you leave as well.
5. After you leave, **Continue with Therapy.** Therapy can help you to stick to your boundaries and to help you heal, emotionally, mentally.

# Creative Date Night Ideas

AMANDA PERRIN, MA, LPC, OCPS

Don't worry, we didn't forget about all of you that are looking to do something fun with your significant other but are tired of the same old date nights. The typical dinner and a movie will be challenging to do this year! However, we have several ideas for you to use instead:

- Become Superhero's: Sit down with one another and talk about what you would do if you could be a super hero. What would your powers be? What would be your main goal? What would your costume look like? What would be your catch phrase? Would everyone know you are a superhero or would you keep it a secret? You can even take the time to draw out each others characters!
- Paint by Numbers or Diamond by Numbers: Amazon and Michaels Craft Store have thousand of scenes to choose from! Buy one for each of you or buy one and paint/bedazzle it together!
- Rekindle the Romance: Write a note to your significant other telling them what you love about them. Think about fun stories, intimate times, and the small things that always remind you of them.
- Clay Sculptures: Pick up or order some play clay and let your significant other tell you what to make!
- 5 Course Meal: Plan and make a five course meal together with a soup, appetizer, salad, entrée and dessert. Check out some ideas [here](#).

If you are still looking for more, Oprah has a list of 35 unique dates ideas [here](#).

## Staff Spotlight

### Paul Dages



**Start Date:** Started Volunteering in Spring of 1988; First Paid position was in Spring of 1989 **Current Title:** Emergency Services Manager

**Previous Job Titles at Townhall II:** Helpline Volunteer, Helpline Trainer, Helpline Substitute Specialist, Helpline Specialist, Co-Coordinator of Helpline Training, Volunteer Mediator, Emergency Services Coordinator

**Background into the field of work:** "I have always wanted to help people. When I was considering colleges and degrees I had decided to study psychology – again in order to learn how to better help people. One day at

Kent State, I passed a flyer hanging up in the Administration building which was inviting people to go through Helpline Training to answer Townhall II's suicide hotline. I figured that now I could actually help people (vs studying how) and... find out if I was any good at it. I applied, was accepted, and I completed Helpline Training. I began Volunteering. I loved it. I have never left."

**Fun fact about Paul:** : He once helped write a television commercial which both won an award, and prompted a person to file a complaint.

**Favorite quote:** "All you can do is all you can do."