



## — Spread the Love —

Valentine's Day is coming soon and what better way to celebrate than to spread the love with fun and engaging activities with the kids! Ok, so maybe that's not exactly everyone's idea of a romantic Valentine's celebration, but many of us with little ones know that this is a great opportunity to also do something fun with family and friends.

Every year, we buy or hopefully make our own Valentines cards for school, but what else can we do to make this a very special day for everyone! How can we use this opportunity to bond with friends and family, show others we appreciate them?

It's not only important to spread the love to others, but also to love ourselves! This is a great time to remind each other that loving oneself is also important. It's a lot easier to spread the love when we love ourselves and are happy with who we are. This is especially important to teach our children early on. Sharing, loving, and being a good friend are all conducive to a better world!

We really don't need Valentine's Day as an excuse, but it is definitely nice to make it extra special on that day. This is a great opportunity to show appreciation for those around us – let them know how much they mean to you.

Here are some ideas of fun and sweet activities that you can do with the kids:

- Make it a movie night and watch a Valentine's

movie such as Lady and the Tramp, Beauty and the Beast, Be My Valentine, Charlie Brown, or the Princess Bride.

- Decorate your dining room with a Valentine's Day theme.

- Make heart shaped place mats and streamers with the kids. Make pink lemonade for dinner.

- Hide a few construction paper hearts around the house and whomever finds the most gets a special Valentine's treat. Of course, you want to have extra treats for second and third place as well!

- Have everyone think of 3 reasons why they love each family member and take turns saying them out loud during dinner.

- Make Valentine's Day appreciation cards and pass them out to people other than just friends and family that you want to show appreciation for. i.e. the mailman, school bus driver, grocery clerk, teachers, etc.

- Be creative and think of other ways to spread the love! Maybe start a new Valentine's day family tradition!

Remember - Love and friendship is all around us every day of the year. Celebrating Valentine's Day may just be the beginning of new traditions and a little extra motivation for little ones to find more ways to express love and appreciation for others and themselves.

Happy Valentine's Day everyone!

*"Where there is love there is life."* - Mahatma Gandhi

- Mey-ling Cortinas

### News & Events

• **February is Special Needs Awareness Month!**

• **February is also American Heart Month!** Wear Red to raise awareness for cardiovascular diseases

• **Movie Night with The Special Needs Partnership**

Join the Special Needs Partnership for an inspirational movie night to celebrate Special Needs Awareness Month. February 28, 2019 from 7:00pm - 9:00pm  
11170 North Central Expressway  
Dallas, TX 75243

<https://jfsdallas.org/event/my-hero-brother-documentary-viewing-special-needs-partnership/>

• **The ARC of Texas 2019 Inclusion Works! Rock the Boat - Conference**

February 10 - February 12  
Embassy Suites by Hilton Denton Convention Center hotel  
[www.thearcoftexas.org/events/inclusion-works/](http://www.thearcoftexas.org/events/inclusion-works/)

• **Rays of Light Night Lights**

Giving parents of special needs children 4 parent night out hours. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Friday of every month - 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. at Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, at White Rock United Methodist on the 1st Friday, and at Christ Foundry United Methodist Mission on the 3rd Friday for Spanish - speaking families.  
[www.raysoflightdallas.org/programs](http://www.raysoflightdallas.org/programs)

• **AMC Sensory Friendly Nights**

Sensory Friendly Film program on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month. Please check your local theatre listings for specific showtimes.  
[www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films](http://www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films)

## Resources

### • **VIVA Pediatrics Resources**

In an effort to help our families, we constantly strive to provide them with relevant and helpful resources and information. Visit our resources page online at: [www.vivaped.com/resources](http://www.vivaped.com/resources)

For current events visit us on Facebook. [www.facebook.com/VIVAPeds](http://www.facebook.com/VIVAPeds)

### • **Care Starter App**

The Connections App is a complete resource guide for families of kids, teens and adults with special needs. Their goal is to help you find providers, organizations and other resources in your community to help you along your path of care. Download the CareStarter App now! [www.carestarter.co/connectionsapp](http://www.carestarter.co/connectionsapp)



### • **The Parker Lee Project**

The Parker Lee Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping families of children with medical needs obtain the necessary supplies & equipment, education, and support they need. While most supplies are covered by insurance, some are not, or not enough supplies are provided. If you have a need for medical supplies or have supplies to donate, please visit their website at [www.theparkerleeproject.org](http://www.theparkerleeproject.org)

### • **Texas Star Kids**

The Texas' Star Kids mandate threatens the lives of our weakest and most vulnerable little citizens. Join us in standing up for those who have no voice. Click this link to sign up: [www.facebook.com/ProtectTXFragileKids](http://www.facebook.com/ProtectTXFragileKids)  
For more info visit: [www.protecttxfragilekids.org](http://www.protecttxfragilekids.org)

### • **Thrive Magazine**

Need Resources for your child with special needs? Thrive Magazine shares resources and stories of other families in the DFW area who are living and thriving with special needs. [www.dfwchild.com/thrive/directory](http://www.dfwchild.com/thrive/directory)

### • **Recognize a VIVA Star**

Viva Pediatrics has an Employee Rewards and Recognition Program to thank and recognize employees that go "above and beyond". Both employees and patient families are welcome to recognize a VIVA employee! Call one of our offices and let us know if a VIVA employee has gone above and beyond!



## Get Healthy with Giggles

### Healthy Holiday Season

February is here and love is in the air. Everywhere we turn there are pink and red hearts, Valentine's candy and even the Hallmark Channel will play Valentine's inspired movies all month long. Hasn't it even been said that "Love makes the world go round."

What do you think of when you think of the word "love"? Do you think of your kids, your spouse, your parents, maybe even your best friend? Maybe you think I really love pizza, LOL. Whatever it is that you think about, we all have a love of something.

Giggles wants to remind each of us that it is important to love ourselves too! Start by doing something every day that makes you feel better. It can be a just going for a walk, taking 5 minutes to yourself, reading your favorite blog or even playing with your kids. By doing simple things and unplugging from our whirlwind lives, we can remember to take care of ourselves too! It's not only important for you, but your family will benefit as well. Leading by example is sure to influence others around you. Giggles wants you to know that you are important and loved.

- Jennifer Ward, BSN, RN

## Food for Thought



### Easy Oreo Truffles

#### Ingredients

- 1 (16 ounce) package OREO chocolate sandwich cookies, divided
- 1 (8 ounce) package Philadelphia Cream Cheese, softened
- 2 (8 ounce) packages Baker's semi-sweet baking chocolate, melted

#### Directions:

- Crush 9 of the cookies to fine crumbs in food processor; reserve for later use. (Cookies can also be finely crushed in a resealable plastic bag using a rolling pin.)
- Crush remaining 36 cookies to fine crumbs; place in medium bowl. Add cream cheese; mix until well blended. Roll cookie mixture into 42 balls, about 1-inch in diameter.
- Dip balls in chocolate; place on wax paper-covered baking sheet. (Any leftover chocolate can be stored at room temperature for another use.)
- Sprinkle with reserved cookie crumbs.
- Refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour. Store leftover truffles, covered, in refrigerator.

*Enjoy this wonderful sweet treat!*

How did the phone propose to his girlfriend?



He gave her a ring!



Just for Giggles!