



Spring Break Toolkit



Nurturing bonds for
a brighter future



Dear Families and Caregivers,

As spring approaches, we are excited to share our **Spring Break Toolkit**, a collection of engaging, educational, and fun resources designed to support your child's learning and well-being during the break.

At the New Jersey Family Engagement Hub, we believe that learning happens everywhere, not just in the classroom. Spring break is a wonderful opportunity to spend meaningful time together while continuing to build important skills in creative and enjoyable ways. **This toolkit offers a variety of activities, including reading suggestions, hands-on projects, outdoor exploration ideas, and social-emotional learning supports that can be adapted for children of all ages.**

Our goal is to make it easier for families to stay connected, inspired, and empowered. Whether you have a few minutes or a full afternoon, these resources are designed to fit into your daily routines and spark curiosity, creativity, and conversation.

We encourage you to explore the toolkit together, choose activities that interest your child, and most importantly, have fun learning as a family. Your involvement plays a vital role in your child's success, and we are here to support you every step of the way.

Wishing you a joyful, safe, and enriching spring break!

Warm regards,

Dr. Lanisha Makle- Ridley and Jeannette Mejias



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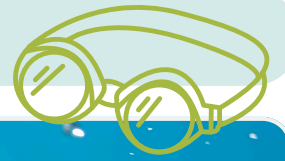


Spring Break Resources

When Is Spring Break in New Jersey?

The state’s K-12 public schools determine when to give their students this much-anticipated time off. Generally speaking, spring break in New Jersey falls between mid-March and mid-April. For 2026, we’re seeing most have it scheduled for the **week of March 30 to April 3 or April 6 to 10**. Be sure to check your district’s official calendar, then plan for family bonding time using our recommendations below.

Waterparks *Day Trips 24 hours at a time*



Island Waterpark at Showboat, Atlantic City

This massive indoor/outdoor tropical waterpark debuted in the summer of 2023 and is advertised as the “world’s largest beachfront waterpark.” Located on the iconic Atlantic City boardwalk, this seaside sensation boasts 11 water slides, the Island Drift Lazy River, FlowRider surf simulator, a 300-foot zipline, and sooo much more. Thrill-seekers will love: Electric Eel and Tidal Racers.

DreamWorks Water Park at American Dream, East Rutherford

At this very moment, people are splashing away at this water-filled wonderland known as the “largest indoor water park in North America.” Get ready for record-breaking slides, luxury poolside cabanas, and a tropical 81°F climate all year long. Ask about the Private Skybox Suites and be sure to swim over to the Burger Shack and try the Move It Move It Burger – it’s one of our favorites.

Big Kahuna's Water Park – West Berlin

For the best waves in town year-round, drift away to this wildly wet and remarkable fun water park in South Jersey. Enjoy 70,000 square feet of indoor water park wows like FlowRider surf simulator, adrenaline-pumping Raging Rivers, and relaxing Tiki Tides, all under a retractable roof. Come back Memorial Day through Labor Day to cool off in the adjacent 2-acre outdoor water park that boasts a wave pool, leisure pool, kiddie aquatic playground and Tiki Bar.

Montego Bay Resort, North Wildwood

On the famous Wildwood boardwalk just steps from the beach overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, you'll find luxury accommodations, a heated indoor pool, and this small in size, yet big on fun, indoor waterpark. Guests of the resort speak highly of this Jersey gem, featuring two water slides, a Tiki Bar, and an interactive play area for kids in every season. It's the perfect place to splash all year.

Note: You must be a resort guest to use the waterpark.

Indoor Fun

- **Nickelodeon Universe, East Rutherford**
- **American Dream, East Rutherford**
- **DreamWorks Water Park**
- **SEA LIFE Aquarium, East Rutherford**
- **BIG SNOW, East Rutherford**
- **LEGOLAND® Discovery Center, East Rutherford**
- **The Funplex - East Hanover**
- **Supercharged Entertainment, Edison**
- **iPlay America, Freehold**
- **Silverball Retro Arcade, Asbury Park**
- **Urban Air Adventure Park, Multiple locations**
- **Sky Zone Trampoline Park, Multiple Locations**



Outdoor Activities & Nature



- Branch Brook Park (early cherry blossom viewing)
- Turtle Back Zoo
- Cape May County Park & Zoo, and walking/hiking at Palisades
 - Location: Interstate Park or High Point State Park.
- Stone Harbor Bird Sanctuary
 - Location: 2nd Ave. & 112th St., Stone Harbor, NJ 0824 Cape May

Frelinghuysen Arboretum

353 E. Hanover Avenue, Morristown | Skylands Region

This public arboretum more than earned its spot on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977. Take a stroll across the grounds this spring, and you'll be surprised by just how many blossoms and blooms will be there to greet you. In March, spy daffodils, Japanese apricots, March jewels and hyacinths. Then April bursts forth with a profusion of spring bulbs, including tulips and narcissus. Return in May to spy irises, bishop's hat, dogwoods, columbine, geums, rhododendrons, peonies, dianthus, geraniums – plus you can buy a bounty of beauty for yourself at the arboretum's hugely popular spring plant sale.

Essex County Presby Memorial Iris Gardens,

474 Upper Mountain Avenue, Upper Montclair | Gateway Region

Why is this public garden called the "Rainbow on the Hill"? That's easy! More than 100,000 irises representing 3,000 varieties burst into a profusion of vivid hues, painting the landscape between mid-May and early June. I wish, you wish, we all wish to witness these irises!

New Jersey also boasts acres upon acres of farms dedicated to growing lavender and selling gotta-have-it lavender-based home goods, personal care products and culinary items.

Follow the intoxicating scent to these four fragrant farms:



Holland Ridge Farms

108 Rues Road, Cream Ridge | Shore Region

Although this **"tulip paradise"** only opened to the public in 2018, it's rooted in a long legacy of Jansen family flora care and cultivation. Peak time to visit is during their U-Pick Tulips: Spring Spectacular, hosted from April to May.

That's when you can pluck-and-pay-per-stem for tulips, feast from over 30 food trucks, add some vibrancy to your social media feed with more photo opportunities than you can count, hop aboard a free tractor-pulled hayride, meet and feed farm animals, catch some live music, and more.

Johnson's Corner Farm

133 Church Road, Medford | Delaware River Region

Spring into the fun at this gorgeous Garden State farm. Hop aboard a hayride to tour the grounds or take part in an Egg Hunt for Easter. This season also brings some pick-your-own goodness with strawberries and cherries ready to harvest mid-May to mid-June, and sugar snap peas for the plucking in early to mid-June.

New Jersey Botanical Garden at Ringwood State Park

5 Morris Road, Ringwood | Gateway Region

The official state gardens are so stunning, it's one of the places we recommend popping the question! **An inspirational spot to visit any time of the year, this destination really shines in spring.** Be sure to include its *Crab Apple Allée, Perennial Garden, Peony Garden, Lilac Garden, Azalea Garden, Wildflower Garden, and Annual Garden* on your seasonal bucket list.

Ort Farms

25 Bartley Road, Long Valley | Skylands Region

With a long and proud legacy of natural and sustainable growing practices at the root of every plant, you can feel good about buying your fresh-picked produce here. Stop in the farm market to introduce a burst of spring color into your home and garden and onto your plate with Easter *flowers, spring annuals and perennials, fresh veggie plants, and local asparagus and strawberries.*

Reeves-Reed Arboretum

165 Hobart Avenue, Summit | Gateway Region

Yet another entry on the National and State Registers of Historical Places, this arboretum dazzles in year-round. *Springtime brings a bounty of blooms to its Welcome Walk, Perennial Border, Primrose Path, Azalea Garden, Irene Reich Wildflower Trail and Daffodil Bowl.* Love these sunny yellow blossoms? Plan to come for Daffodil Day, held at the arboretum every April.

Rutgers Gardens

130 Log Cabin Road, New Brunswick | Central Jersey Region

Spring right into the color shown in this destination's Rhododendron Garden, Helyar Woods, and Ornamental Tree Collection, where the dogwoods, magnolias, and cherry trees are in flower.

Visiting on a Friday? Be sure to stop by Cook's Market (**located right at the entrance to the Gardens**) for farm-fresh produce, baked goods, live plants, cut flowers, floral arrangements, and even more homegrown and handcrafted treats from local vendors.

Sayen House & Gardens

155 Hughes Drive, Hamilton | Central Jersey Region

Every year, this public garden dazzles with 250,000 flowering plants, including its famed heirloom azaleas, rhododendrons, and dogwoods. Don't be surprised if you witness a couple exchanging nuptials in the picture-perfect gazebo on spring weekends. And make sure you say "I do" to attending the garden's annual Azalea Festival in May.

Terhune Orchards Vineyard & Winery

330 Cold Soil Road, Princeton | Central Jersey Region

Orchards might be in the name, but this destination goes – and grows! – well beyond apples. Head to the fields to pick your own asparagus (mid-May to early June) and strawberries (late May to early June). Pop in the farm store for freshly harvested asparagus (May – June), herbs (April – November), kale (April – November), lettuce (May – December), peas (May – June), radishes (May – October), and Swiss chard (May – September). Then, stick around to taste some of the orchard's celebrated wines.



Willowwood Arboretum

300 Longview Road, Chester | Skylands Region

As long as Mother Nature cooperates, we have mapped out exactly when and where you can find your favorite spring blooms at this arboretum:

March: crocus in the Entrance Drive, Parking Lot, and Private Drive, hellebores in the Cornus mas Bed, Rockery, and Stone Barn, scilla in the Cornus mas Bed and Rockery, winter jasmine at the Stone Cottage, and witch hazel in the Parking Lot.

April: cherry trees in the Orchard, daffodils in the Entrance Drive and Winter Garden, early perennials in the Rockery and Cottage Garden, magnolias everywhere, pansies at the Stone Barn, Pan's Garden, and Cottage Garden, and shadbush in the hedgerows.

May: azaleas, crabapples and dogwoods everywhere, ferns and Japanese primroses in the Woodwalk, lilacs in the Lilac Collection, Overflow Parking and Highland Park, pansies at the Stone Barn, Pan's Garden and Cottage Garden, peonies at the Cottage Garden and Rosarie, redbud in the hedgerows and woods, perennials at the Cottage Garden and Rockery, tulips at the Stone Barn and Pan's Garden, viburnum in the Orchard and Virginia bluebells at the Cottage Garden.



More Farms

- Field & Flock Lavender Farm | 264 Williams Road, Woodstown (Delaware River Region)
- Hidden Spring Lavender & Alpaca Farm | 890 Route 601, Skillman (Central Jersey Region)
- Orchard View Lavender Farm | 101 Karrsville Road, Port Murray (Skylands Region)
- Pleasant Valley Lavender | 298 Pleasant Valley Road, Morganville (Shore Region)



Local Activities & Events

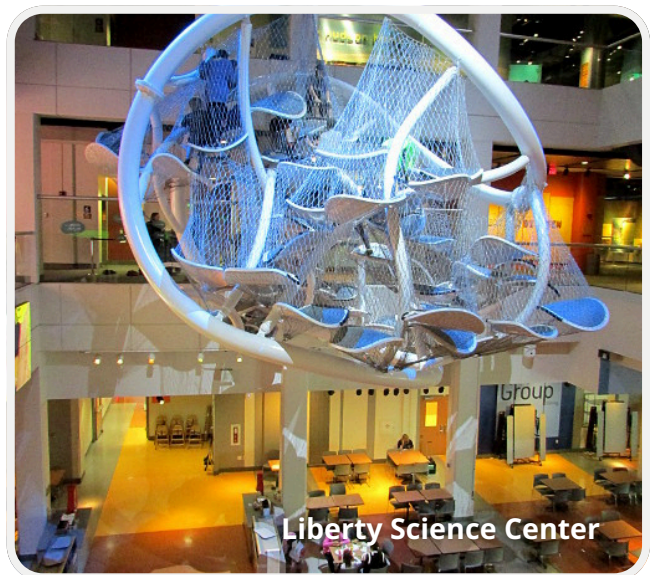
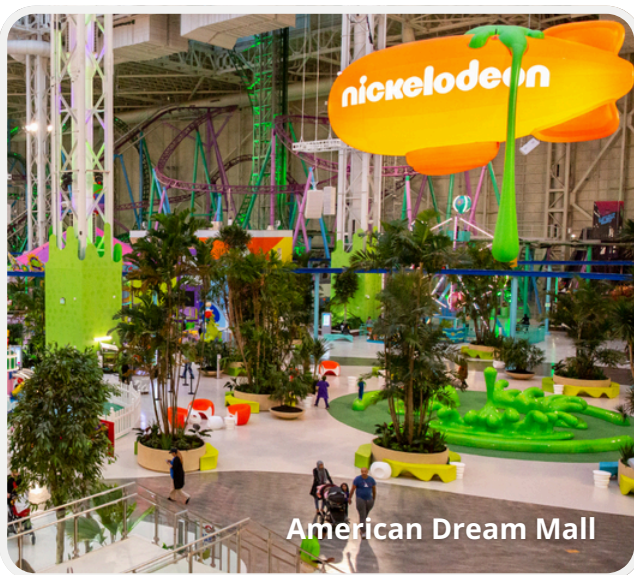
- **Museums & Educational:** Liberty Science Center (hands-on exhibits), Grounds for Sculpture (outdoor art), Monmouth Museum, and Newark Museum of Art.
- **Boardwalk & Shore:** Jenkinson's Boardwalk (aquarium, arcade, rides), Point Pleasant Beach, and Morey's Piers (Wildwood).
- **Farms & Seasonal Events:** Alstede Farms (springtime activities) and Howell Living History Farm.
- **Six Flags Great Adventure:** Opens for the 2026 season on March 28 and has a special Passholder Preview on March 27. Safari Spring Break event running through April 12 .

Key April 3-19 Events

- **Easter EGGStravaganZoo:** Cape May County Park & Zoo (early April) - scavenger hunt, bunny visits, and activities.
- **Cherry Blossoms:** Essex County Cherry Bloom Festival, Celebrating 50 years. Starting April 4-19 at Branch Brook Park. Experience this natural wonder that is larger than the display in Washington, DC.

Tips for Families

- **Pre-book tickets:** Popular attractions like American Dream and Liberty Science Center can get busy, so book ahead.
- **Outdoor Preparation:** April weather can vary; check local forecasts for Branch Brook Park and the shoreline.



Self Care Tips



Physical Wellness

- **Active Play:** Aim for at least 1 hour of activity each day, such as riding bikes, dancing, or playing sports.
- **Nutrition:** Let children help make healthy meals that include fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- **Rest:** Create a regular, calming bedtime routine, such as reading together, to help children sleep well.
- **Hygiene:** Show children how to take care of themselves by washing their hands, brushing their teeth, and brushing their hair.



Emotional and Mental Wellness

- **Mindfulness & Breathing:** Teach children simple deep-breathing exercises to help them manage stress and worry.
- **Creative Expression:** Provide children with drawing, painting, or craft supplies to help them express their feelings.
- **Journaling:** Suggest that children write about their thoughts or draw pictures to help them understand themselves.
- **Limit Screen Time:** Suggest activities without screens, such as reading, doing puzzles, or spending time outdoors.

Emotional and Mental Wellness Conti.

- **Safe Spaces:** Set up a quiet area where children can relax and feel safe, like a cozy corner with books or soft toys.
- **Identify Needs:** Help children understand when they are tired, hungry, or stressed, allowing them to take proactive steps to feel better.
- **Setting Boundaries:** Encourage kids to say "no" to overwhelming activities and reduce screen time, fostering healthier, non-digital, and creative habits.



Simple Daily Habits

- **Hydration:** Make sure children have water nearby so they can drink throughout the day.
- **Chores:** Suggest simple tasks like making the bed to help children feel accomplished.
- **Routine Breaks:** Use simple cues, like ringing a chime between activities, to help children transition smoothly.



Videos

- **Self-Care Just for Kids!**
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s20iNLTRwo&t=14s>
- **Self-Care For Kids: A Guide to Taking Care of Your Body, Mind, and Feelings | Self-Care Tips**
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6t_Elb_OcQY



Websites

- **12 Tips for Self-Care for Kids (and why it's important)**
 - <https://www.calm.com/blog/self-care-for-kids>
- **11 Simple Self-Care Habits for Kids**
 - <https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/simple-self-care-habits-for-kids>
- **The Importance of Self-Care: Teaching Kids to Take Care of Their Mental Health**
 - <https://engagetherapy.com/the-importance-of-self-care-teaching-kids-to-take-care-of-their-mental-health/>

