

February, 2026 | Issue 43

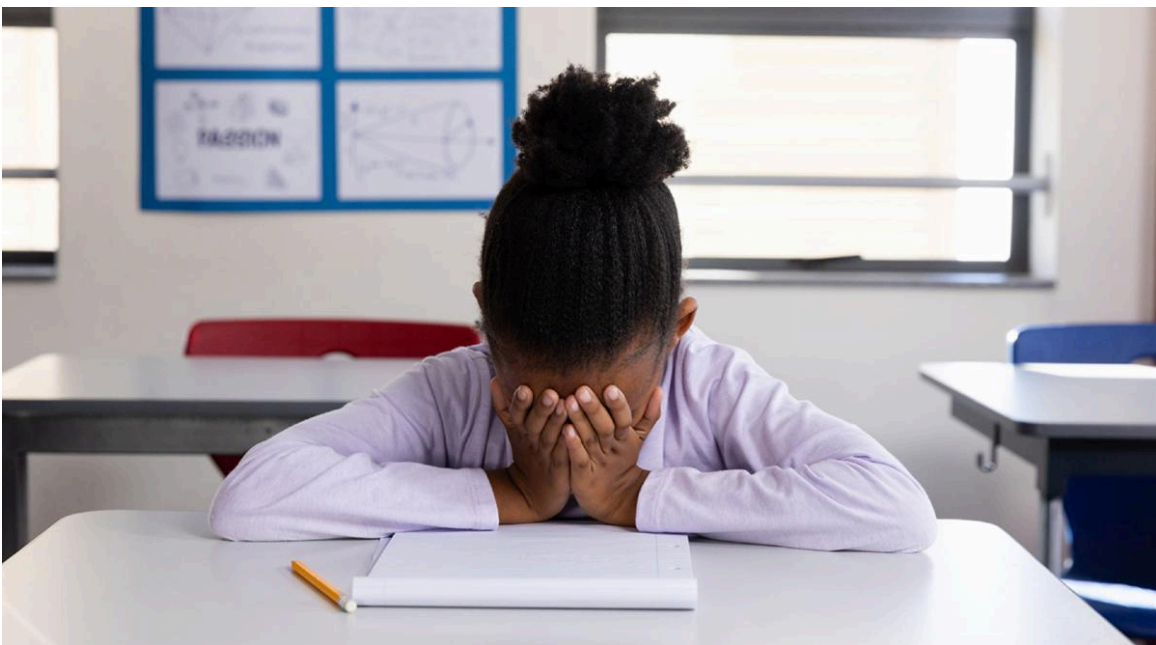


Happy February

If you are like us, January felt more like a year than one month! But we made it through and hopefully aren't far from sunshine, warmth, and signs of spring. Fortunately, February has lots of reasons to celebrate like Valentines Day and Black History Month.

Nurture the Future is a program of The Guidance Center that offers free resources and preventative education in the Downriver area to develop strong families and inspire and assist parents as they raise children. Please share this newsletter with your friends and family and encourage them to sign-up for the mailing list by clicking the link below.

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ASK THE EXPERT:

Academic Anxiety - When School Stress Becomes Too Much

By: Juliann Garey, Child Mind Institute

For many children, school comes with a dose of everyday stress: a tough test, a presentation in front of the class, or the pressure to finish a big assignment. That kind of stress is normal. But for some kids, school-related stress can turn into something more consuming and disruptive. Left untreated, it can take a serious toll on children's well-being and performance.

Ken Schuster, PsyD, a neuropsychologist at the Child Mind Institute, has seen firsthand how school stressors can lead to serious anxiety. Because school is where kids spend most of their time, it's not surprising that it's the focus of their attention and worries. "Academic anxiety isn't a clinical diagnosis in itself," he explains. "It's really anxiety that's triggered by school demands. And for some kids, that trigger is so powerful it disrupts their ability to learn and thrive."

What is academic anxiety?

"Everyone feels stress sometimes," says Dr. Schuster. "It's part of life. The key difference is whether it fades once the stressful event is over." Kids get nervous about a test, but once the test is done, the anxiety should drop. "If it doesn't — if a child is losing sleep, avoiding school, melting down over homework, or can't enjoy being with friends — that's when we start thinking about an anxiety disorder," he says.

Because school stress can trigger different kinds of anxiety, clinicians look at which specific anxiety disorder best matches a child's symptoms. Constant, free-floating worry might be diagnosed as generalized anxiety disorder. Extreme perfectionism — like erasing so many times the paper has a hole in it — can be evidence of OCD. If the fear centers on performance situations — like reading aloud or speaking in class — social anxiety disorder might be the best fit. Kids who have racing hearts, trouble breathing, or feel like they might pass out before a test may meet criteria for panic disorder. The goal is to figure out how the anxiety shows up and whether it's getting in the way of everyday life.

Is school stress getting worse and more pervasive? Dr. Schuster says kids have always worried about school, but today's kids face some extra challenges. More students are competing for spots at selective schools — both private and public and certainly colleges — and the pressure to take advanced classes starts earlier. Then there's social media, which amplifies the feeling that everyone else is doing better. "When I was looking at colleges in the 1990s, it was a personal process with my family and counselor," Dr. Schuster says. "Now kids scroll TikTok and

see other students comparing test scores and acceptance rates. That magnifying glass can make the pressure feel a lot more intense.”

Symptoms to watch for

School stress doesn't look the same in every child, but there are some common patterns parents and teachers can spot:

- **Physical complaints:** Headaches, stomachaches, or nausea before school or exams
- **Avoidance:** Refusing to go to school, cutting class, or procrastinating on assignments
- **Clinginess or meltdowns:** Younger kids may cling to their parents at drop-off or melt down at homework time
- **Obsessive studying or perfectionism:** Spending excessive hours on assignments, rewriting or over-preparing
- **Difficulty concentrating:** Trouble staying focused in class or on homework because of racing thoughts
- **Sleep and appetite changes:** Sleeping poorly, overeating for comfort, or losing appetite altogether

Dr. Schuster notes that symptoms can occur in other contexts besides school. “The stomachaches, the meltdowns, the obsessive behavior — those aren't unique to school stress. What makes the difference is the trigger. If schoolwork is what sets them off, that's what we're dealing with.”

[READ MORE](#)

Winter Car Seat Safety Tips: Keeping Kids Safe & Warm



Winter is a tricky time for car seats. As a general rule, bulky clothing, including winter coats and snowsuits, should not be worn underneath the harness of a car seat.

Why Winter Coats are Dangerous?

In a car crash, fluffy padding in a coat immediately flattens out from the force, leaving extra space under the harness. A child can then slip through the straps and be thrown from the seat.

Car Seats & the Plus-One Layering Rule for Babies

As a general rule of thumb, infants should wear one more layer than adults. If you have a coat on, your infant will probably need a coat and blanket. Just **remember to remove the coat and blanket inside the car** before putting your child in the car seat. A safer option is to drape a blanket or coat over the car straps.

Walter White Community Resource Center

All are welcome to browse the CRC's
Adult Clothing Closet, Book Room, Diaper Depot,
Home Essentials & Decor, and Mom & Child Room.

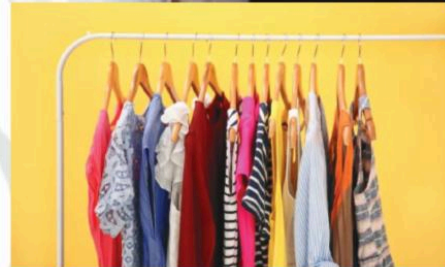
OPEN HOURS (Appointment required)

Mondays
12-4pm

Tuesdays &
Wednesdays
8:30am-12pm

To schedule an appointment,
make a donation, or for more
info please call Hazel Makino
at 734-780-1793.

Walter White
Community Resource Center
550 Eaton Street
(Entrance is off of Palmerston)
River Rouge, MI 48218



DID YOU KNOW:

This Old School Landline Phone for Kids is Selling Out Across the Country?

By: Isabella Paoletto, Jan. 28, 2026

You know what they say, trends always find their way back. In fact, there's even a theory out there that says popular style and trends tend to come back in 20-year cycles.



Hence, where the [Tin Can](#) phone comes in — a brand-new, old phone that lets you plug into the wall and call friends and family.

It's a modern interpretation of the vintage landline phone that was usually mounted on a kitchen wall in the 80s. According to the Tin Can website, the throwback phone was invented to let kids call their friends and loved ones without a smartphone or internet access.

“We believe technology for kids doesn't need to be addictive to be useful. We believe in giving kids ways to connect without handing them a screen. And we believe a phone should still be allowed to just be a phone,” it says on the Tin Can website.



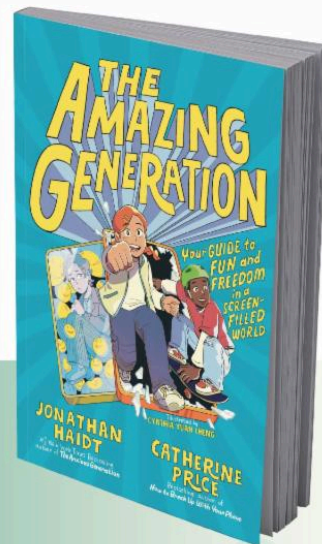
While the phone is meant to look like a relic of the past, it does have some modern features: it connects to Wi-Fi and a companion app where parents can control things like quiet hours and who can call the Tin Can. The phone also has several speed-dial buttons that can be programmed with specific phone numbers in the app. There's also a voicemail button that lets kids listen to any messages left on their Tin Can.

According to the product's website, the first four batches of Tin Cans have already sold out, but another batch drops in April. It currently **retails for \$100**. Calls from Tin Can to Tin Can are free, but to send and receive calls from regular phones, it's \$9.99 a month, but the first month is free with the purchase of a new phone. Both plans support calls to 911. The landline phone is targeted at kids ages five to 12 but also depends on the age at which parents want to allow their kids to start using a cell phone.

BOOK CLUB

The Amazing Generation

by Jonathan Haidt and
Catherine Price



Tuesday, March 3, 2026
5:30-7pm

The Guidance Center's Center for Excellence
13111 Allen Road, Southgate MI 48195

The Amazing Generation: Your Guide to Fun and Freedom in a Screen-Filled World is aimed at kids and tweens (ages 9-12) and offers a positive, practical guide to managing smartphone use and living a more fulfilling "analog" life. Inspired by Haidt's *The Anxious Generation*, it uses facts, a graphic novel, and real-life stories to empower young people to take control of their tech use, focusing on fun, confidence, and real-world connection rather than just restrictions.

Read together with your child and come ready to discuss *The Amazing Generation*. Parents and kids will have a chance to meet separately and then come together for games and dinner.

**Free books available: text 734-308-0768
for your copy! (while supplies last)**

**RAFFLES &
GIVEAWAYS
INCLUDED!**



Register at

www.guidance-center.org/book-club2

Group discussion and dinner provided.

For more information contact Allison Smith at
asmith@guidance-center.org or 734-308-0768

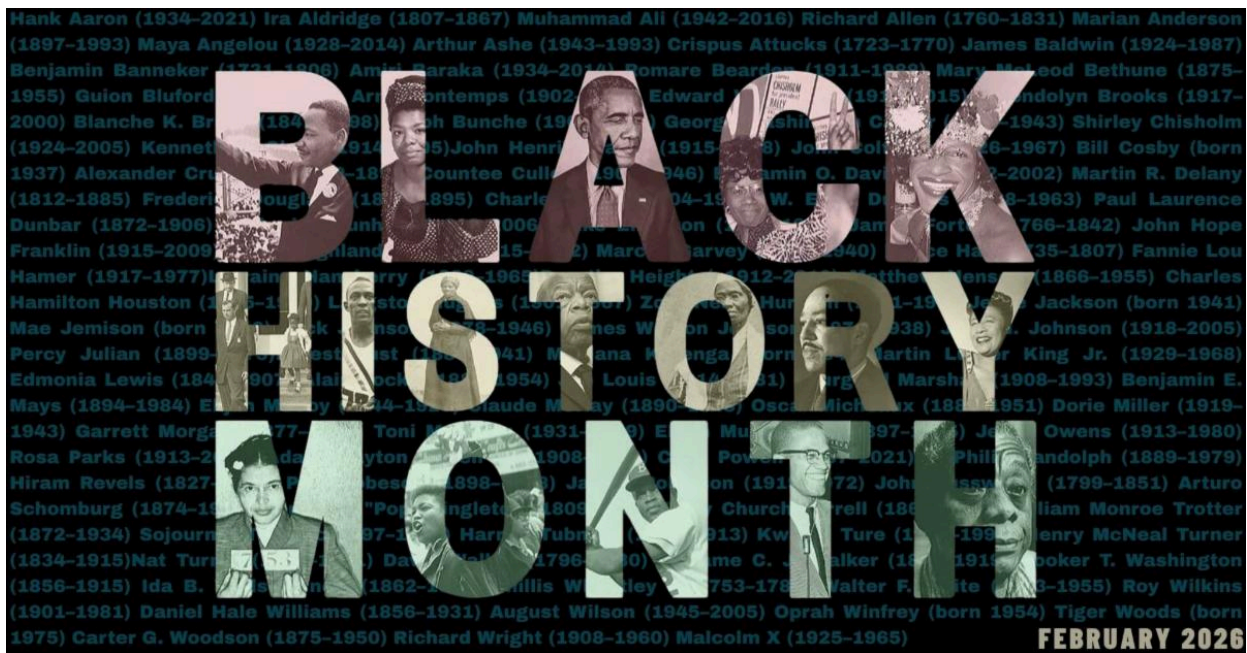


REGISTRATION

PDF to PRINT

February is Black History Month

Please be sure to check out some of these great [family events and exhibits](#) around Metro Detroit.



Our Favorite Sledding Hills in Metro Detroit

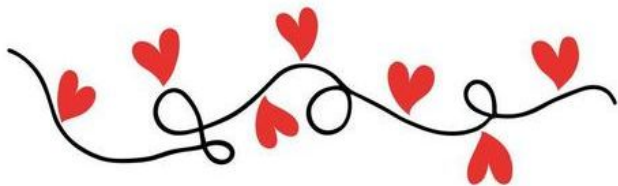
By: Carrie Budzinski, Little Guide Detroit
January 1, 2026



Despite our deepest desires to burrow in and hibernate for the winter, our kids seem to be numb to the cold and excited to get out and enjoy the winter wonderland that Michigan brings every year. So, bundle up and wax those sleds, because it's time to go riding!

No matter where you're located throughout Metro Detroit, we have a full [list](#) that range from kiddy hills to 'Dead Man' hills. Take your pick and have fun.

If you want to stay closer to Downriver, check out Civic Center Park in Woodhaven and the Gibraltar Community Center, which has some nice hills and is less busy than the Metro Parks.



The Guidance Center | 13101 Allen Road | Southgate, MI 48195 US

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