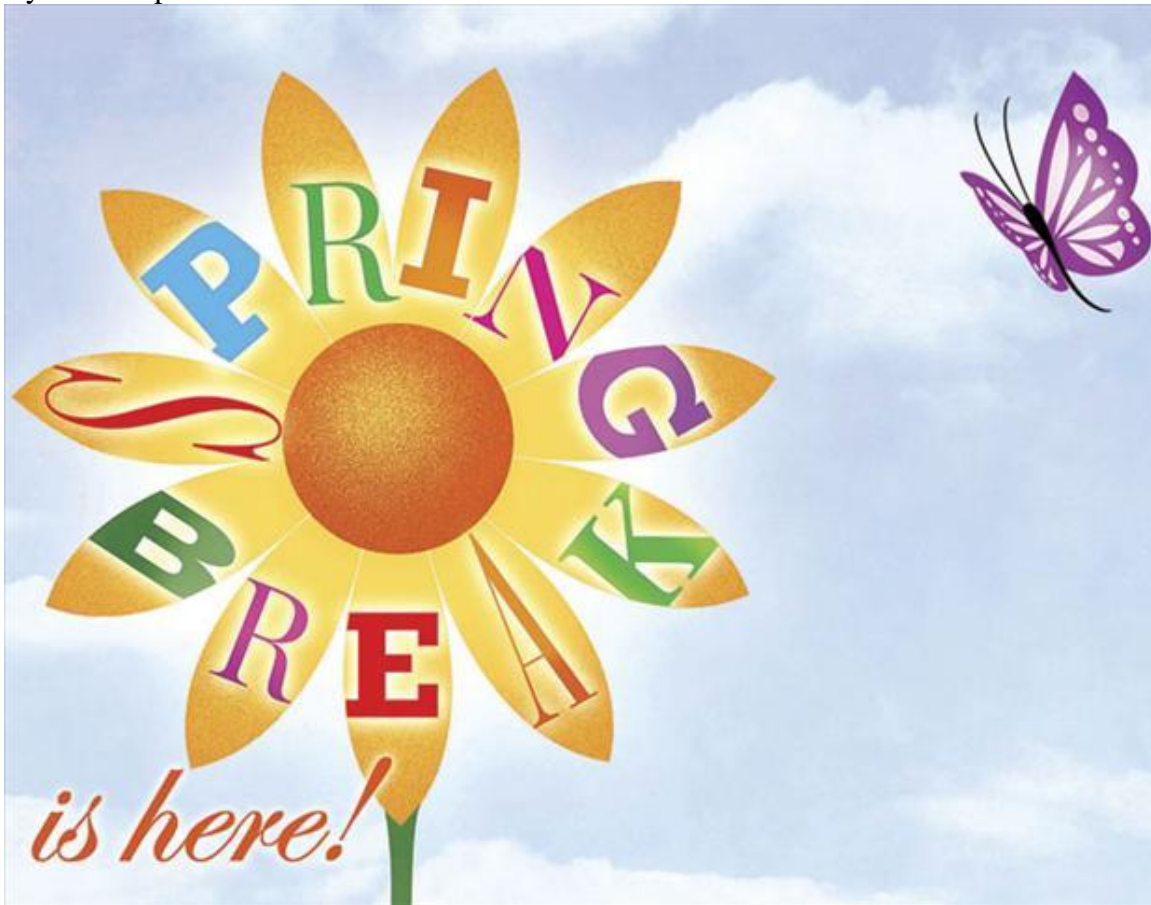


Chattanooga Times Free Press

Sunday, March 20, 2011

By Staff Report



Spring Break Survival Guide

Parents, it's finally here. Spring break in Hamilton County schools starts this weekend—and with it come significant challenges.

How will you occupy your children this week? For some working parents, just finding day care is a big hurdle.

The Times Free Press staff has assembled some lists to help you navigate the week and, maybe, keep the kids happy, too.

Last-minute sitters

- KidsPark, 2020 Gunbarrel Road, 305-1796: KidsPark takes drop-ins ages 2-12 for short periods of baby sitting.

According to Terry Matthews, a KidsPark employee, there is a one-time \$25 registration fee, then the hourly fee is \$7.50 per child or \$11.50 for two children.

“A child may stay up to seven hours one day or up to 14 hours in one week. This does not take the place of day care,” she said. “Also, children must wear socks. If the child arrives without them, we sell socks here.”

KidsPark hours are 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m. to midnight Friday, 9 a.m. to midnight Saturday, closed on Sunday.

- Sittercity: Moms needing sitters for longer lengths of time might want to try Sitter City, an online source of local baby sitters.

Log onto timesfreepress.com then click the [chattamoms](#) link in the gray bar across the top of the homepage. Scroll to the bottom of the [chattamoms](#) page to the yellow bubble that says Sitter City, enter your ZIP code and click.

Up will pop multiple choices of local women ranging in age from teens to retired schoolteachers who are willing to care for children. Their prices range from \$8 an hour to \$500 per week.

Each entry includes a short profile of the applicant: her age, experience, fees and areas of specialty such as caring for special-needs children or infants.

To check references, moms must register with the site. There is a free trial offer for seven days, or it's \$35 per month.

- Parent co-op: If all else fails you might try recruiting several other working parents to form a child-care team this week. Some have pointed out that a series of five “day camps” — Monday through Friday — in five different households can be a good way to patch together a week of supervision. This way, a parent in every household doesn't have to burn a whole week of vacation just to bridge spring break.

—*Susan Pierce*Parents, it's finally here. Spring break in Hamilton County schools starts this weekend—and with it come significant challenges.

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