

## JANUARY 2017 DIRECTOR'S NEWSLETTER



Dear **TechStars** Families,

Technology continues to grow and shape our world. Children as “digital natives” seem to take these advances in their stride, never having known anything else. Adults as “digital immigrants” seem to play a constant game of catch up as new devices and software are added to our technology toolboxes. With new advances coming into our daily lives faster and faster, it is important to identify and put to use the positive effects that technology offers us while maintaining a balance of digital use by all members of our families. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association produced a short informational video titled The Digital Diet: 5 Tips to Maintaining Healthy Balance, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjSpzEVnNoQ&feature=youtu.be>. The common sense tips listed are a good spring board for creating the digital balance that will work for your family. Too much unsupervised screen time is certainly not the answer and may likely have negative effects on growing children. Quality family time together can never be replaced with a digital device; however, using new technology as a parent-child team to grow and learn together is the best of all worlds. We at **TechStars** take our role in introducing your child to new technology seriously and understand the benefits of developing interactive social skills in young children. We hope the knowledge our teachers share with your family is helpful and look forward to continuing with this mission in 2017.

January in Delaware usually doles out chilly temperatures, harsh winter weather and the inevitable “cabin fever” that makes parents and children alike yearn to get out of the house and try new experiences. Consider these “un-plugged” activities your family can enjoy indoors at local venues:

- **Hagley Museum’s Invention Convention, Jan 14-16.** Learn the history of videos and explore how videographers create videos to entertain and inform us. Then work together as a family to create blended moving images with thaumatropes and flip books, use unusual objects to create sounds for silent video sequences, create original stop motion videos and use a green screen to combine layers of images producing amazing results. *(FYI...Many **TechStars** alumni students are already familiar with green screen technology, having already created awesome photos featuring themselves in faraway places.)* The Invention Convention presented by Agilent Technologies will also offer science shows on Chemistry, Physics and Weather as well as Tinkering Tables and a Create-an-Invention area. Admission: \$8/Adults, \$6/Children 4-14 and Free/Children younger than 4 and Hagley members. Lunch and snacks are available at the Belin House Organic Café. <http://hagley.org/calendar/invention-convention-presented-agilent-technologies-jan-14-15-16>
- **Science Saturday “Truss Me, You Won’t Fall!” Jan 28, 1-4 pm.** Hagley Museum, 201 Hagley Creek Rd, Wilmington, DE. Become engineers for the day by designing your own bridge to hold as much weight as possible. This activity is included in the cost of regular admission and is free for members. Look for more Science Saturday family activities in February and March. <http://hagley.org/calendar/science-saturday-truss-me-you-wont-fall>

- **Delaware Children's Museum**, 550 Justison St, Wilmington, DE. Open Tuesdays-Sundays, Closed most Mondays. Open Jan 18 on Martin Luther King Day from 10 am – 3 pm. Exhibits include the Stratosphere 30-foot diameter climbing adventure in the lobby, Structures by the Environmental Alliance, The Power of Me by AstraZeneca, EConnect by DuPont, Bank On It by Chase, Training Wheels by AAA and Studio D by Delaware College Investment Plan. General admission is \$8.75 with children 12 months and under free. Members are always free. The museum is available for birthday parties and group visits. <http://www.delawarechildrensmuseum.org>.
- **Stratosphere Trampoline Park** at 510 Justison Street on the Wilmington Riverfront is open year round, but closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. The Jumping Beans program for children under 6 years is every Friday from 10 am to 4 pm, \$10/child. The jump park has attractions and programs for all ages and is available for birthday parties and group rentals. Safety waivers are required for all jumpers. <http://www.wilmingtontrampolinepark.com/>

When your family is ready to explore the great outdoors, consider the following “un-plugged” suggestions:

- **First State, First Day, First Hike** features a New Year's Day Hike in each of Delaware's State Parks. Celebrate the first day of the New Year with a refreshing hike in a park. Remember to bring water, wear sturdy walking shoes and dress in layers for the weather. Along the way, take photos of your family enjoying Delaware's great outdoors. Find a complete listing of Delaware State Park Hikes with meeting locations, start times and more details at <http://destateparks.com/FirstDay/>.
- **Horizon Riverfront Rink** at 301 Justison St, Wilmington, DE has returned for its 3rd season! This 72' by 120' temporary public open-air ice skating rink is scheduled to remain open for skaters daily through Feb 28, 2017 with extended hours during the Holiday Break through January 3. Helmets are suggested but not required for children under 4 years. Open daily; hours vary. Operation is contingent upon weather and ice conditions. <http://riverfrontrink.com/>.

January brings a New Year full of hope, anticipation and challenges. Best wishes from our **TechStars** family to your family for a safe, happy and successful 2017!

Sincerely,

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Owner/Director

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TechStars by Computer Explorers of New Castle County



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