

NOVEMBER 2017 DIRECTOR'S NEWSLETTER



Dear **TechStars** Families,

November is the time of year when my staff and I are thankful for our good fortune and good friends. We at **TechStars** are thankful for the opportunity to share our technology curriculum with your child and for the continuing support of parents, teachers and directors at Brilliant Little Minds, Children's House Montessori School, Concord Preschool & Childcare, Green Acres, Grow and Learn, Hockessin Montessori School, Kids Korner, Kind Minds Kids, Nannies, Nemours Child Development Center and Tower Hill After School. Thank you for choosing **TechStars**!

Does your child have access to a digital device on a daily basis? For most families the answer is probably yes. With our lives becoming more mobile, it makes sense that children today prefer digital devices they can take with them in the car and use while waiting in doctors' offices, restaurants and stores. The Common Sense Census on media use by children younger than 8 years finds that while the amount of screen time hasn't changed much, the ratios have. Today's children are watching television less and using digital devices more. Because this finding is a reality, parents and teachers can benefit from working together to offer children quality digital media content that is age appropriate, demonstrate good digital citizenship skills and set time limits for use of digital devices. **TechStars** is proud to provide quality technology lessons in small group settings that teach technology skills as well as reinforce academic skills and promote social skills including collaboration. We are dedicated to staying in close contact with the families of our students so that together we can better prepare our children for the digital world of tomorrow. Find a short article titled "Kids' Screen Time Shifts Dramatically Toward Phones and Tablets" by Michael Robb of Common Sense Media at <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/kids-screen-time-shifts-dramatically-toward-phones-and-tablets>.

Reminder: Daylight Saving Time **ends** on November 5, 2017. When local daylight time is about to reach Sunday, November 5, 2017 at 2:00:00 AM clocks are turned backward 1 hour to 1:00:00 AM local standard time. Sunrise and sunset will be about 1 hour earlier on Nov 5, 2017 than the day before.

The end of Daylight Saving Time and increasing chill in the Fall air mean more time at home is spent indoors. This is the perfect opportunity to invite your child to join you in exploring **eStars**, also known as **CT's Technology Club**. The link is <http://www.computerexplorers.com/e-stars-2> and the password for November 2017 is bot1117, the last 4 characters are numerals. **eStars**, a free added value benefit extended to all **TechStars** families, is curated by Playrific. Upon entering this child-safe, user-friendly learning portal, choose from English Language Arts, Mathematics, Earth Science, Life Science, Engineering and Technology activities. Each of these content areas offers a variety of games, videos, puzzles and e-stories. Time spent together exploring **eStars** allows your child to share what he/she is learning in technology class. This time together provides an opportunity for your child to practice using a mouse to guide the cursor, helping to develop hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills. **eStars** activities are designed for children up to 5 years of age. Families are invited to share this learning portal with

older siblings; the **Explorer** level targets ages 5-7 and the **TechStar** level targets ages 8-10. **FYI: eStars activities are different from those presented in your child's technology classes. eStars is not compatible with mobile devices.**

Each month this newsletter offers a list of several family-friendly, off-screen activities. A few "un-plugged" activities your family may wish to consider for November include:

- **LEGO® STAR WARS™ DAYS. LEGOLAND Discovery Center**, Plymouth Meeting Mall, Unit #1055, 500 W Germantown Pike, Plymouth Meeting, P 19462. Sat, Nov 4 & Sun, Nov 5. Let the Force be with you. Travel to a galaxy not so far away to enjoy tons of family fun activities and Star Wars themed building. Take part in LEGO® Stars Wars™ Group Big Build featuring Yoda, Build your own LEGO® Star Wars™ creation at Build and Test. Join a LEGO® Star Wars™ build class to learn top tips and tricks. Find LEGO® Stars Wars™ characters in the MINILAND Model Display. Join the scavenger Hunt. Bring your camera for great photo opportunities. Win prizes and giveaways while supplies last. Pre-purchase tickets in advance to guarantee entry. No additional purchase necessary for Annual Pass Holders. Tickets \$19-\$34. Free for children under 2 years. <https://philadelphia.legolanddiscoverycenter.com/whats-inside/events/lego-star-wars-weekend/>
- **Autumn Leaf Special Train Ride to Hockessin. Greenbank Station**, 2201 Newport Gap Pike, Wilmington, DE 19808. Sat, Nov 4 & Sun, Nov 5. Final weekend! Bring your camera and behold the Autumn colors of the Red Clay Valley. Travel the entire length of the railroad (a 17-mile round-trip) to the town of Hockessin. Spend a ½-hour layover in Hockessin where your family can browse the local shops or purchase food for the return trip from one of several eateries near the tracks. Reservations are strongly suggested. Sell out is very likely. \$19/Adults, \$18/Seniors 60+, \$17/Children 2-12 & Free/Under 2. Call 302.998.1830. <http://www.wvrr.com/default.aspx> (Click Fun for Kids to learn how Wilmington & Western Railroad can make this journey special for your young train enthusiast.)
- **33rd Annual Holiday Fair Fine Craft Show.** Rehoboth Art League, 12 Dodds Lane, Henlopen Acres, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971. Sat, Nov 4 & Sun, Nov 5. Take a family road trip to the beach and stop for a unique art and shopping opportunity. Stroll the Historic Homestead, Chambers Studio, Paynter Studio and the Corkran and Tubbs galleries where more than two dozen artisans will exhibit and sell jewelry, glassworks, pottery, clay sculpture, painting, woodworking, mixed media and decorative and wearable fiber creations. Weekend entry fee is \$5/adult. No charge for children under the age of 12. Purchase tickets at the door. <http://www.rehobothartleague.org/2017-holiday-fair-fine-craft-show.html>
- **Science Saturday: Invention Convention Sneak Peek. Hagley Museum and Library**, 200 Hagley Creek Rd, Wilmington, DE 19807. Sat, Nov 11. Get a sneak peek at activities for Invention Convention 2018. Visitors will learn how insects help us tackle everyday problems, how they inspire new technologies and the important role they play in our food industry. This is a drop-in activity, feel free to join the fun at any time from 1 to 4 p.m. <http://www.hagley.org>
- **A Charlie Brown Christmas. The Everett Theater, 47 W. Main St., Middletown, DE 19709.** Fri, Nov 17; Sat, Nov 18 & Sun, Nov 19. This classic animated television special comes to life with this faithful stage adaptation, in which Charlie Brown, Snoopy and the rest of the Peanuts Gang discover the true meaning of Christmas. Show time vary. Reserve your seat with a \$2 donation. Call 302.232.6338. www.everetttheatre.com

- **Shrek The Musical. Delaware Children's Theatre**, 1014 Delaware Ave, Wilm, DE 19806. Sat & Sun, Nov 18, 19, 25 & 26. (also Dec 2, 3, 9, 10, 16 & 17). Recommended for ages 4 and older. Shows begin 2 pm. Everyone's favorite ogre is back in this hilarious stage adaptation of the award-winning DreamWorks film. Unlikely hero Shrek and his sassy sidekick Donkey set off to rescue the feisty Fiona, but there is more to this Princess than meets the eye. Shrek the Musical is part fairy tale, part adventure and all fun! Admission \$14/child & \$15/adult. Call 302.655.1014.
<http://www.dechildrenstheatre.org>
- **Thanksgiving Weekend at Hagley. Hagley Museum and Library**, 200 Hagley Creek Rd, Wilmington, DE 19807. Fri, Nov 24 – Sun, Nov 26. 10 am – 4 pm daily. Bring your family and out-of-town guests to enjoy activities, crafts and games. Sample historic holiday dishes inspired by nineteenth-century recipes from "The Hagley Cookbook," play hide-the-thimble and other parlor games and dress up in nineteenth-century clothes for a picture-perfect memory. Admission \$14/Adults, \$5/children 6-14, Free/children 5 and under, Free/Members. Use Hagley's main entrance off Route 141. **(Annual Holidays at Hagley Exhibit** opens Fri, Nov 24 and runs through Mon, Jan 1; closed Mon, Dec 25)
<http://www.hagley.org/>

Best wishes to your family for a safe and happy Thanksgiving!

Sincerely,

Roni Deely

Owner/Director

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TechStars by Computer Explorers of New Castle County



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