



Richmond's Ya Ya Motherhood group meets regularly for playdates



Moms' groups are a great way for young children to make friends



Michelle Carlson at her daughter, Avery's fourth birthday party



Jennifer Heath and her son, Ryan, gear up for fun with Rosenberg Mommies and Tots

Mommy Meet Ups

Fort Bend Moms Socialize and Connect through Local Parenting Groups

*Written by Jennifer Heath
Select Photography by Jen Petty*

All over the area, stay-at-home moms are venturing across town to socialize and connect with other full-time parents, thanks to a variety of local parenting groups. Whether they're at craft parties or the park, more and more Fort Bend moms are filling up their social calendar with parent-friendly playdates.

Socializing and Support

When Marina Roberts first moved to Rosenberg, she couldn't find a playgroup for her then 2-year-old son and 2-month-old daughter, so she decided to begin the Rosenberg Mommies and Tots group in January 2009. "I wanted to find moms going through the same things as I was and provide encouraging words and help each other get through those rough toddler days," she says. "But most importantly, I wanted to make some

lasting friendships. It gives us a chance to just get out of the house and talk to other adults about anything, it doesn't have to even be kid-related. Moms can expect to make life-long, lasting friends as well as get advice from other moms that may be going through, or have been through the same situation." Today, about 40 moms and their children are members. The group hosts events almost daily, at either parks, restaurants, members' houses, or public locations. Parents can fill their children's social calendars with as many – or as few – playdates as they want.

Learning from Each Other

Chryshelle Spurgeon also wanted to find stay-at-home mothers she could relate to, so she began the Ya-Ya Motherhood group in Richmond in 2009. "The Ya-Ya

Motherhood is a group of hip, fun, and friendly local moms who enjoy getting together to visit, laugh, cry, share experiences, exchange advice, and just plain have fun," she says. "I think that often, we as mothers, judge one another too harshly. We leave our judgments at the door. No mother is perfect, and we are here to help each other through." Like the Rosenberg Mommies and Tots group, the Ya-Yas meet throughout the week for playdates and mom time. There are also moms' night-out events and couples dates, too. "I think the socialization involved with the children of stay-at-home mothers is important," says Spurgeon. "It is the perfect place for mom and child to get out of the house, meet with friends, and have a good time on a weekly basis."



Cheryn Preiss enjoys a day in the park with her daughter



The Rosenberg Mommies and Tots group meets almost every day



Norma Treece spends quality time with her sweetie

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Heather Ferdjani and her son explore a local park




Groups are a great way for moms to connect with one another and share parenting tips



Photo by Chrystelle Spurgeon Photography

The Ya-Ya Motherhood group organizes a variety of fun learning activities for children








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How to Find a Group

Performing a quick internet search for a playgroup in your neighborhood can be the easiest way to find other stay-at-home moms. Meet-up.com also has some listings. Another way to find a group of moms is to ask neighboring elementary schools for suggestions. Honor McCurdy found an ad in a local newsletter looking for moms in the Fulshear area. "The kids got to meet others who would be attending Huggins Elementary with them and start making friends who lived close enough to get together with often," she says. "It is great to have other kids stopping by the house all the time and knowing their parents and families. I want my kids to feel a part of their neighborhood and community." Once you find a group, all it usually takes is asking the organizer of the group if you can join. Most groups have a small, yearly fee of \$5 to \$10.

Family and Friends

Most playgroups ask moms to attend at least one event a month. Popular activities include holiday parties, "breakfast in pajamas" mornings, and craft events, where moms get to bring home a keepsake. The Fulshear moms group held a New Year's Eve balloon drop complete with a sparkling cider toast for the kiddos. They've traveled to a fire station, trick-or-treated together, and played outdoors during the summer.

While the kids run about, the moms can interact with other adults and vent, laugh, or just enjoy time out of the house. "This playgroup is like another child of mine," says Roberts. "I want this to be a very successful group and to have many moms say great things about us and spread the word and have more mummies join. I love seeing everyone bond



Weekly activities give children the chance to discover their talents



Rosenberg mom Jennifer Soto has fun with her children during a playdate



Play groups let moms and their children create memories that will last a lifetime

and form friendships over time. Hopefully, our kiddos do the same and they can grow up together or at least remember all the fun things they did with their mommies and friends when they were younger." If you know of an organization in Richmond, Rosenberg, or Fulshear doing great things in the community, email editor@sugarlandmagazine.com. **SLM**

JENNIFER HEATH is a writer and full-time mother to her sons, Landry and Ryan.

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Moms'
Group**

Fulshear Moms' Group
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**Rosenberg Mommies
and Tots**
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The Ya-Ya Motherhood
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