



**NEW & NOTEWORTHY HAPPENINGS IN
OUR VILLAGE**



HUDSON
TWINSBURG
SOLON

JANUARY NEWSLETTER

New Year
DO YOU

Finding my #strengthinmotherhood

Events & Happenings

January Playdates

Free playgroups are available weekly after Stroller Strides classes

Wednesday Jan 8, 10:30am and

Thursday Jan 9, 7pm (after class) - [Toy Swap Playdate](#)

Monday Jan 13, 10:30am and 7pm (after class) - [Snowman Windstock Craft](#)

Thursday Jan 16, 10:00am - [Play Date at Cafe O' Play](#)

Friday Jan 24, 11:00am - [Lunch & Play at Chick-fil-A Solon](#)

Wednesday Jan 29, 10:30am and **Thursday Jan 30**, 7pm - [Hot Cocoa Sensory Bin Play Date](#)

January Mom's Night Out

Wednesday Jan 22, 7pm - [Proper Exercise Form Workshop & Food/Drinks at Oak & Embers](#)

Visit our [Facebook page](#) or email juliebutt@fit4mom.com for more details



31 WAYS TO DO YOU THIS NEW YEAR

We created a 31-day calendar challenge for the month of January, filled with ways to help Mom find her strength in motherhood in the new year.

FREE DOWNLOAD

New Year DO YOU

Finding my #strengthinmotherhood

1. Create a 2020 affirmation
2. Make a 2020 bucket list
3. Make a list of your accomplishments
4. Write down 3 things you are thankful for
5. Make your bed
6. Plan a date night with someone
7. Sit down + take 8 deep breaths in + out
8. Spend 20 minutes in nature
9. Take the day off from social media
10. Write down 3 things you LOVE about yourself
11. Host a happy hour or mom's night in with friends
12. Start a new podcast or book
13. Declutter an area in your home
14. Go to bed 30 minutes earlier than usual
15. Call someone you love
16. Try to have a "complaint-free" day
17. Take yourself to see a movie or to lunch
18. Write down 3 things that bring you joy
19. Clean out your email inbox
20. Attend a FIT4MOM class
21. Take back a hobby you've neglected
22. Let the dishes wait until tomorrow
23. Turn off your phone at mealtime with the fam
24. Donate clothes you won't wear anymore
25. Cut sugar out of your meals today
26. Tidy up your workspace
27. Try a new recipe
28. Relax on the couch and put your feet up
29. Play board games with your family
30. Buy a non-toxic houseplant
31. Schedule your annual doctor appointments

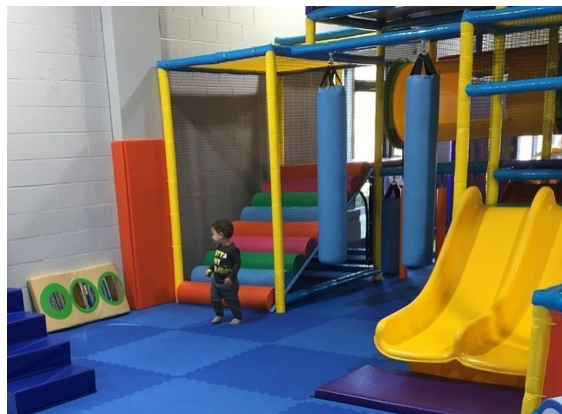
FIT4MOM | @FIT4MOMHQ

Our Favorite Local Winter Activities

Getting a little stir crazy and looking for something to do with your little one(s) this Winter? We got you, mama. Our village of mamas weighed in on their favorite local indoor activities to do during the winter months to keep you and your babes happy.

Museums/Zoo

1. [Akron Children's Museum](#)
2. [Cleveland Children's Museum](#)



3. [Cleveland Natural History Museum](#)

4. [Cleveland Zoo Rainforest](#)

Indoor Playgrounds

1. [Cafe O Play](#) - Stow (join us there on [January 16!](#))

2. [Play Day Cafe](#) - Solon

3. [Chick-Fil-A Solon Play Area](#) (join us there on [January 24!](#))

4. [StowHudson McDonald's Play Place](#)

Trampoline Parks

1. [Get Air](#) - Akron or Middleburg Heights

2. [Sky Zone](#) - Boston Heights

Nature Centers

1. [Liberty Park Nature Center](#)

2. [Brecksville Nature Center](#)

Art Studios

1. [KalliRaes Creative Studios](#) - Solon

2. [Thrive Arts Center](#) - Beachwood

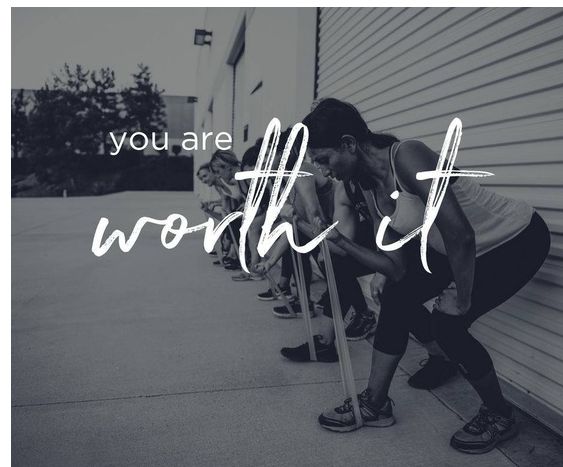
Your local library!

Last Call for Body Back®!

Winter Session Starts NEXT TUESDAY and we have

ONE spot left!!

Body Back® is not about getting your physical "body back" after having a baby; there is no such thing as a pre and post-baby body; just one...yours...a temple of motherhood and fourth-trimester womanhood. One body that grew a human being and changed you -- for the better. Find your #strengthinmotherhood and discover your postpartum self,



from the inside, out. Nourish your being, lift your spirit, and reach new heights in an 8-week journey with other women and other moms. Join our mamahood sisterhood in 2020.

Session runs from January 7 - February 29

Tuesdays, 7-8PM and Saturdays, 8-9AM at Twinsburg Cleveland Clinic Family Health & Surgery Center, 8701 Darrow Rd

Receive a FREE copy of "The Empowered Mama" written by Lisa Druxman with your registration (a \$20 value)

ENROLL NOW



Mama of the Month

Meet Carrie Cooper, our Mom of the Month! This series features a different mom of our Village each month.

Tell us about your family: My husband, Andrew, and I have been married for 7 years and have two boys, Samuel (3) and Amos (1), and a husky named Max. We love being outside and traveling, and we are total nerds. If ever you want to discuss the newest sci-fi movie, fantasy novel, or play a board game, let us know!

Hometown: Fort Wayne, Indiana

Current/previous career: I worked as a zookeeper for a while, but eventually settled on a career as a seasonal park ranger at Cuyahoga Valley National Park. I love the work that I do there, mostly environmental education for school groups, and that it allows me to also have half the year at home with my kids. Most recently, I started working a couple days a week as a Tinkergarten leader, which allows me to bring my kids to work with me and teach in my favorite classroom: outside!



What does motherhood mean to you? To me, motherhood is a never-ending paradox. It is the hardest thing I've ever done, yet in some ways it's so natural and easy. I love my kids to death, yet sometimes I want to kill them. I love seeing my boys grow and learn new things, but I cry when I put away all the clothes they've outgrown. I always feel so tired and like I can't possibly make it through another day, but somehow I accomplish more each day than I ever did before I had kids. It's definitely not at all what I expected, and I would be lying if I said I love every second of it, but at the end of the day I feel so blessed to get to raise these little boys.

How did you find FIT4MOM? My cousin was part of a FIT4MOM group in Florida, so I had heard of it before. I felt so bad about the way I looked and felt after my first was born, so I checked to see if there was a group in the area. I started going when Samuel was 10 weeks old and have been a loyal member since!

What classes do you currently attend and why do you love them? I attend the Stroller Strides evening classes. It is so nice when I work to not have the guilt of leaving my kids for even longer when I don't see them during the day, and I don't have an excuse to not go because I bring them with me. I love the accountability of the group and the motivation I get from seeing everyone else working hard. And of course the best part is the friendships I've made!

How has FIT4MOM changed your life? I was never athletic, never played sports in school, and never worked out consistently. Now I actually look forward to exercising and am sad when I have to miss a class. I feel overall better and have more energy than I used to. So the physical benefits have been great! Emotionally, it has been so wonderful to find a village of women who are so supportive and helpful. No one should go through life without a community, and that especially applies to new parents. This group is so welcoming and there is always someone to offer advice or a hug when you need it.

Favorite exercise: Is cool down walk an option? Just kidding. I like the legs station because it is easiest for me, but I feel proud of myself when I do an exercise that is harder for me, like arms.

What's one thing you would go back and tell yourself as a new mom? I would tell myself that I was doing a good job. That's something new moms never hear enough.

Proudest Moment: I had a pretty rough labor with my first and ended up having an emergency c-section. I didn't want to repeat that experience when it came time for my second to be born, and thankfully I was able to have a successful VBAC. I was really proud of that, and I definitely think my consistent working out through my pregnancy helped a ton!

Questions for kiddos:

How old is Mommy? 2

What's something Mommy always says? You so silly

What is mom really good at? Read a book

What's mom's favorite thing to do? Read a book

What makes you proud of your mom? Basketball

We are so happy to have you as a part of our Village and can't wait to see you continue to crush your goals

New Year, New Me.... Wait What? I

Like Old Me!

Written by Charlotte Beers Plank

Every single year, without fail, I get to the end of December and get sick. I push and push and push until Christmas is upon us, and then, inevitably, I end up sick in bed. Or if I'm not in bed, I'm not very pleasant to be around. Now that I have a kid of my own, I can't check out around this time of year, and, really, I don't want to miss out on anything! This year's Christmas, with an almost 2.5-year-old, was the first time he really "got it": the magic of Christmas. It is so much work, but to see my son so happy about a small rubber ducky he got from his aunt, or saying "I want the lights on the tree, Daddy!" - without fail, every morning -- it's so special.



After getting through December 25, we are faced with a week which is both slow and fast - the week between Christmas and New Years. This year in particular, our whole house had colds - even the cat! - and we fell into a sort of non-routine. We weren't strict on mealtimes or bedtimes, and I fell out of the habits that usually are so beneficial to me (exercise, good sleep, outings, etc). This year, I noticed something else during this week. The marketing that's everywhere in our lives from social media ads to email promotions.... It all changed from "make sure you get all your shopping done in time!" to "New Year new you: _____" [insert some catchy phrase here]. I immediately started to feel the pressure rising with each day getting closer to 2020.

Before every January 1 up until the last couple years (well, since my son was born!), I would come up with a lengthy list of resolutions for the next year. They were never small. It was always go big or fail! But it would never work, at least not in the long term. When I finally realized my pattern, I started to develop a few habits, instead of resolutions, that I could tweak at any point, not just at the new year.

Here are some habits - not necessarily brand new - that you can stick to:

Drink enough water.

I have found that if I don't drink enough water, I am not at my best. I am groggy, sluggish, and I may mistake my thirst for hunger. I try to have a goal of 80-100 oz per day, knowing that some days I'll reach it, some days I won't. I have a water bottle that holds 32 ounces - it's helpful to only have to refill it three times in one day! It's easier some days than others. When I'm home with my son, it's definitely harder to remember than when I can take a break from work and walk to the sink to refill it. This is always something I am working on - thus, my first goal for the new year!

Drink and eat in moderation.

Although with paying attention to how much water I'm consuming each day, I try to pay attention to what other things I put in my body. I often notice a correlation between too much of something and my mood, or perhaps even how I'm feeling physically. As much as I love sweets (chocolate and ice cream!), I try to be really careful about how much I'm

eating, because I usually don't have an "off" button! Sometimes it's easier for me to not buy the pint of ice cream than to have it in the house, knowing it's there..... So I've switched to other sweets/treats that I know I won't binge on! It helps me feel like I'm not really restricting, but I'm making different choices that are better for me.

The same goes for alcohol - I almost always go through periods of abstaining for a bit, just because I feel like, for me, it helps to know I don't "need" it. I make exceptions, but I know that my goal is to be careful with what I eat and drink. For the longest time I associated what I'm eating and drinking with my weight. But that has never worked for me - meaning, I would always be extremely hard on myself, telling myself I would never eat ice cream again! Or something similar with alcohol. Because it was always linked with my weight/physical appearance, I would constantly be worried what the "consequences" were. Instead, I'm allowing myself to pay more attention to how it makes me feel. I know I will feel better if I have ice cream once in a while than every day - even if that's what I want!

Move my body - and remember to rest.

If you are reading this blog, you have all made a commitment to yourself in prioritizing your physical fitness. Whether you go to Stroller Strides with your kids, train with Run Club+ or take time for yourself with Body Back, you are putting your health first, and that's a huge accomplishment. Why not celebrate those wins? You don't need to completely re-brand yourself and become someone else with a bigger fitness goal. Let's lower our expectations and find some goals that we can actually keep!

I try to hit my 10,000 step goal every day, but I know life happens and some days are better than others. Lately, I've had more success when I think of it as 70,000 steps/week instead. It seems like a huge number, but for some reason, it's easier for me to think big picture. At the end of a 45-50k step count week, I know I could have spent more time on my feet than sitting, so I try to remind myself to take more walks or throw in a quick run. Don't track your steps? I find that if I'm active 3-5 times a week, I usually hit my goal.

This year, I'm training for a half marathon. It seems daunting right now, but I have followed the 5k and 10k training up til now, and I feel I'm ready for the next step. I'm taking more time to complete the training, because I know I'll have weeks where my training might not go as I'd like or as I've planned it out. I set my goal of moving my body - but remembering to rest - because it's not going to be a straight line, from 0 to running 13.1 miles. There might be runs where I'm quick on my feet and feeling great, and others where I'll have to drag myself out to run. I'm realizing that for me, my fitness journey is not linear, but curvy, sometimes with lots of twists and turns! I am committing to giving myself the gift of movement, whatever it is, be it a 6 mile run at a quick pace, or a walk around the neighborhood with my son.

Make sure to sleep

This is a big one for me. I am a night owl, through and through. It doesn't matter that I'm now a mom and I have to get up whenever my kid is up. I will still want to go to bed late! I have really struggled to follow a good sleep routine. But if I have not gotten enough sleep, everything suffers. I'm tired, cranky, and just not feeling my best. If I can, I try to prioritize my sleep these days - and set a schedule and reminder to go up and fall asleep!

My point is simple: yes, set goals, and find joy in reaching them, but also notice the journey along the way. I try to see the progress, not perfection - because then I lose sight of what is important to me and go back to criticizing every tiny little thing that only I would see. In a recent [post on Facebook](#), Anne Lamott wrote to her readers and urged them not to go on a diet starting January 1st. She wrote, "Maybe some of us will eat a bit less, and walk a bit more, and make sure to wear pants that do not hurt our thighs or our feelings. Drinking more water is the solution to almost all problems." I really related to

this. I would rather be in a place where I still recognize the person I am and strive to be.

Join me as we enter a new decade! New year, same me! Let's celebrate and strive to be our best selves. Happy New Year!

Want to join our Village? Your first class is always free!

LEARN MORE

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