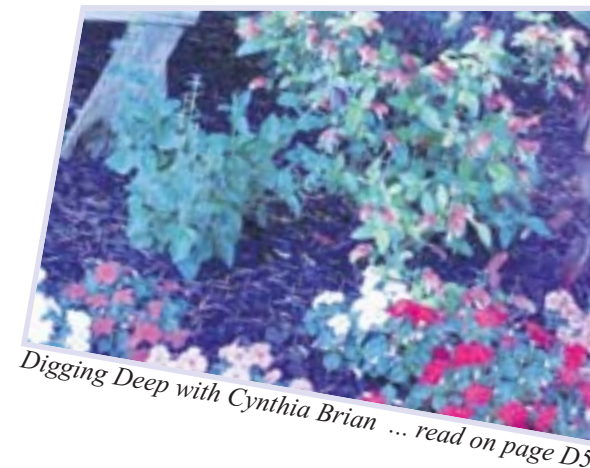


# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

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## To Bounce or Not to Bounce...

By Cathy Tyson

What's round, black, usually enclosed and full of summer fun? Many families with children who don't want the maintenance of a pool but want their kids to turn away from electronics and get some great exercise opt to install a trampoline in their backyard. Little ones up to high school and beyond can jump to their heart's content and get a terrific work out in the process.

"We love our trampoline," said busy Lafayette mom of four kids Madeline Fleischmann, explaining that her children and their neighborhood friends could spend hours on it, but it comes with a huge added bonus – right in their own backyard. She's already booked picking up and dropping off the kids' at lacrosse and swim team practices.

"I try to make it as friendly as possible," Fleischmann said, they have just a few rules they make the kids obey - no shoes and no toys, a parent has to be home and they need to check in before getting started. The family got the trampoline and a play structure five years ago at Christmastime. Since then the trampoline has seen constant use; the play structure – not so much. They eventually ended up getting rid of it.

Kids Fox, age 8, Gary, 9, Justice, 17, and Holly, 14, have had endless hours of fun with games like dodge ball, deadman, kick ball, cat and mouse and

fish out of water. Holly especially likes to have sleep-overs on it. In the winter, the kids wear their furry swim parkas and during the summer, Dad RJ has hooked up "mistlers" that spray a fine mist of water over the tramp – kids can wear their suits and slide on the surface. "It's a 10!" exclaims Fox.

"If you could harness that energy, you could light a small city," said pho-

tographer Doug Kohen last week as he was photographing Fox Fleischmann and his friend, Miles Elze. Both boys are going into third grade at Springhill Elementary.

Concerned about safety, the Fleischmanns purchased a double bounce model that has two layers, kind of a shock absorber designed to reduce the risk of injury, along with an enclosure.

With one minor exception, they've never had an injury in five years of constant use. In fact, all the trampolines researched for this story had enclosures that keep participants on the bouncy surface rather than in the surrounding grass or dirt.

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Miles Elze, left, and Fox Fleischmann spend some quality time on the Fleischmann's backyard trampoline.

Photo Doug Kohen