



## Activities for Summer Break

Summer is a much needed break for many children and families. Make the most of summer by helping children have fun while learning new things. The ideas below are for children of all ages and include suggestions for both the home and the community.

**1. Enjoy the Weather** – Many communities have swimming lessons, group sports, or one-day neighborhood events. Encourage children to participate in these activities so they make new friends, learn new sports, and stay healthy. If children are ambivalent about trying something new, let them join with a friend. Children may be more interested in an activity if one of their friends is on their team or in their swimming group. Doing outdoor activities is a great way to spend quality time with your children and show the importance of physical fitness. Make evening walks or bike rides part of your routine. Besides doing physical activities outdoors, learn to simply enjoy the nice weather by having picnics or sitting outside to read or have a snack.

**2. Explore Creative Opportunities** – There are many free websites with printable games, coloring pages, and ideas for simple art activities. These easy and free resources are fun for children. To locate activities, search the internet using keywords like ‘children’s art activities’ or ‘children and art’. Additionally, many art supply stores, arts centers, children’s museums, and home improvement stores offer free or low-cost one day clinics. The classes usually appeal to children of a wide age range and are offered on a regular basis. Don’t forget to check activities in your community center. Many community centers offer singing, acting, or music classes to help children of all ages explore their creative side.

**3. Invite Friends to Play** – Plan play dates for children. Besides having fun while playing, children develop important social skills by spending time together. When planning a play date, have a variety of fun games and activities handy to encourage children to interact instead of watching television. Rain or very hot weather can prevent children from playing outside so be sure to have board games, cards, and other indoor activities handy in case they can not go outside. Simple games are not only fun for children, but they teach important skills such as turn taking, sharing, problem solving, and conflict resolution.



From *Playing Together*

**4. Complete Projects Together** – Projects such as planting a garden, planning a summer party, or researching ideas for the family vacation are exciting summer activities. Include children in your projects to teach them time management, responsibility, and life skills. If you are planting a garden, children can learn about plants, water them regularly, and pick fruits and vegetables. If you are planning a party, kids can help make invitations, plan the menu, or prepare the food. If you are planning a family vacation, show children guide books and maps and let them help plan different events for the vacation. Children like to spend time with adults and work with them on projects. These activities will engage children and teach them valuable skills while giving you a little extra help.

**5. Read More** – Encourage reading for enjoyment by including reading activities in your routine. Local libraries often have story time for preschoolers and a variety of other learning activities for elementary aged children. If your local library does not have these programs, have fun at the library by browsing and checking out books with your children. Also, check your local book stores for children’s program. They frequently have similar story times and fun programs.

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