

Summer Activities

Summer is just around the corner! Kids look forward to summer as it's a welcome break from school, homework and tests.

Yet, it doesn't take long before kids start to feel bored. Finding ideas for activities that are affordable and engaging for kids and their family can be difficult, that's why we've compiled a list of fun and free or inexpensive summer activities that families and neighbors can enjoy together.

- **Read:** Most towns/cities have summer reading programs. These programs help encourage kids to keep reading during the summer by offering rewards. Explore your local library online to find out about a summer program.
- **Travel Back in Time:** Research and find free museums in your area! City museums and parks often have free days or donation entry fees, making it affordable to learn about history in your area as well as other areas in Nebraska. There are literally hundreds of museums throughout Nebraska!
- **Discover the "Wilderness":** Camp outside in your backyard or make a tent inside! Inside or out camping can be a fun and you can learn about nature and develop some "mad" outdoor camping skills, such as setting up a tent, roasting marshmallows and making s'mores, as well as, how to use a compass, recognize and identify what plants are safe and what plants are poisonous etc.



- **Make a Splash:** Hook up a sprinkler, get out the hose and/or fill up a plastic pool and "let the water games begin" for a fun day in the sun. Rinse and repeat for next week!
- **Plan, Pack and Get Your Picnic on:** Make a day out of eating outside at a local park, neighborhood grassy area or even your backyard. Instead of eating lunch inside, take to the outdoors to a picnic table or just throw a blanket down and ENJOY!
- **Get Creative:** Have an arts & crafts day once a week. Let your kids pick an "artsy" activity to do each week. Don't forget to showcase the artwork. Remember art is in the eye of the beholder! Behold and be proud!

- **Exercise:** Hold a swimming competition, have a neighborhood pick-up game, ride bikes, jump rope, go for a walk, play catch etc. Staying fit and active with family and friends can help you bond together.
- **“Board it up”:** Find board games you have around the house and hold a family game night. You can let the winner pick the next game. Feel free to expand and hold a neighborhood board game night.
- **The Next Greatest Chef?** Let your kids try their hand at cooking dinner or baking dessert, with your supervision of course. Make it a real challenge by giving them a budget and taking them shopping for the needed items.
- **Outside Movie Night.** Many communities now have outdoor summer movie nights. You can check your local area to see if your community will be hosting one. Or with a little online research and effort you can create and hold your own outdoor viewing party right in your own backyard! So, breakout those lawn chairs and blankets, grab some popcorn and drinks and sit back and enjoy the show!
- **Got talent?** Hold a family or neighborhood talent show to find out some of the “crazy skills” right in your own family or neighborhood!
- **Scavenger/Treasure Hunt.** Plan and have a scavenger/treasure hunt. Make lists of items to locate or make a map and have a treasure hunt. And if you are feeling super inspired, you can hold the ultimate scavenger/treasure hunt with your own version of the “Amazing Race” with your neighbors and “Goonie” it up!



- **Volunteer.** There are so many organizations that could use the help. Find out what is available in your area and let kids volunteer doing something that interests them. Kids who volunteer not only feel a sense of accomplishment and importance, they also tend to pick up some good skills and work ethic along the way.

The important thing to recognize and remember is that these kinds of activities can do more than keep kids active and entertained during the summer...they often create memories that last a lifetime!

Have a Happy, Safe Summer!