

SUMMER TIME, SUMMER TIME, SUM-SUM, SUMMER TIME!!!!

Summer is right around the corner! Kids have always looked forward to summer because of the welcome break from school, homework and tests. And now that we have turned the corner from the pandemic and we are on our way to some good ole' fashion "normalcy", this summer might be one of the most highly anticipated summers in recent times, for all ages.

Yet, ideas for activities that are affordable and engaging for kids and their families 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.

- **Day...or Night at a Museum:** Research and find free museums in your area. City museums and parks often are free or have free days. There are literally hundreds of museums throughout Nebraska!



- **Explore & Discover the "Wilderness":** Camping anyone?!? Camp outside in your own backyard or make a tent inside! Camping can be fun and you can learn about nature and develop some "mad" outdoor camping skills, such as setting up a tent, roasting marshmallows and making smores, as well as how to use a compass, and how to recognize and identify what plants are safe and which are poisonous.



- **Fishing Anyone?** Nebraska Game and Parks has a variety of fishing programs aimed at recruiting kids to the sport of fishing. Some of their events include youth fishing tournaments as well as community fishing events, where rods, reels and expert instruction are all available to young and new anglers at no cost.



- **Hoses, Sprinklers, Slippery Slides, Oh My:** 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!



- **Picnic it Up:** 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 art activity to do inside or outside. Don't forget to display the artwork. Remember, art is in the eye of the beholder! Behold and be proud!



- **Good Ole' Exercise:** Host a backyard volleyball tournament, shoot some hoops or host a neighborhood pick-up game, ride bikes, jump rope, go for a walk, or play catch. Staying fit and active with family and friends makes for a more active and fun summer!



- **Game Night:** Find board games you have around the house and hold a family game night. Go a step further and host a neighborhood board game night.



- **“Worst Chef” or “Top Chef”:** There is only one way to find out! Let your kids try their hand at cooking dinner or baking dessert, with adult 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!



- **Scavenger/Treasure Hunt:** Plan and have a scavenger/treasure hunt. Make lists of items to locate for a scavenger hunt or make a map and have a treasure hunt. You can hold the ultimate scavenger/treasure hunt with your own mini-version of the “Amazing Race”!



- **Volunteer:** There are lots of organizations and programs that welcome 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 any and all of these activities do more than keep kids entertained during the summer...they often create memories that last a lifetime, especially following such an unprecedented summer last year!

Have a Happy, Safe Summer!