



KIDS KORNER



**Cooperative
Extension Service**

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A newsletter designed with Parents of Young Children in mind!

JANUARY 2011

Child's Play Should Be Outdoor Play

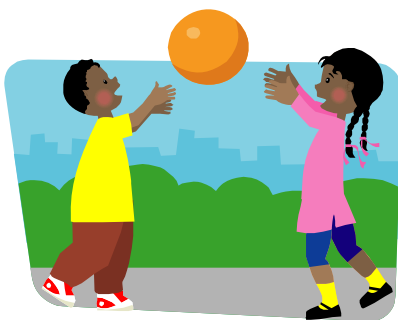
Did you know that children today are in danger of having shorter life spans than their parents? And did you know that danger exists at least partially because of children's unhealthy daily activities? A loud wake-up call is sounding from America's children if we have ears to hear. We need to pay attention to that call and redirect our children firmly toward daily outdoor interaction with nature.

A recent research-based report from the National Wildlife Federation is called, "Whole Child: Developing Mind, Body and Spirit through Outdoor Play." It points out that when not in school, the average child in 2010 stays indoors watching television and playing with electronic media. By the time the average preschooler starts kindergarten he will have watched more than 5000 hours of TV. Most school-age and adolescent children watch television and other electronic media several hours each day. They get to school and after-school activities primarily by being driven. Their families frequently eat fast food for dinner while dashing to evening activities. When they arrive home, homework may be done in front of the television.



When are children walking anywhere or playing freely outdoors? Only around 25 percent of American children now play outside daily, compared with about 75 percent of the previous generation. Children today also have less opportunity to play during recess at school. Recess is being phased out of many schools. As the NWF report notes, "The nature of childhood has changed: There's not much nature in it."

How much active time outdoors should kids have? The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends one hour of daily active play in nature. Children benefit from freely chosen outdoor play in various ways:



- Children concentrate better in the classroom. They become more creative and better at problem solving and critical thinking. They score higher on standardized tests and assessments. Studies show that regular interaction with nature may also reduce Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.
- Children are more physically active when playing outdoors. They burn more calories, gain stamina, and strengthen their muscles. They get their quota of vitamin D, the sunshine vitamin. It is necessary for bone and heart strength.
- Children feel less stressed and happier. Just looking at nature can produce this lightness, even before playing in it. They are more likely to share and cooperate. They learn how to play in teams. They are more likely to be kind and caring. In short, they act more human.

It takes more than a village to raise a child these days; it takes time outdoors in a park or other natural space. It seems that children are programmed to be outdoors for their total health. If we as adults continue to encourage children to focus their free time on indoor, electronic activities, we will actually shorten their lives in a preventable way. Let us change our way of using leisure time, before it is too late!

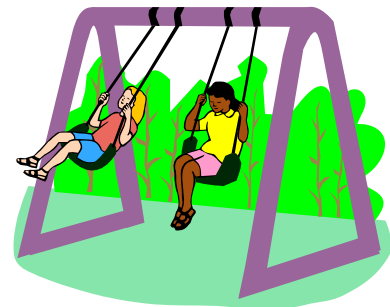
Reference: Rich, M. (2010). Whole child: Developing mind, body and spirit through outdoor play. Reston, VA: National Wildlife Federation. Available at <http://www.beoutthere.org>.

Source: Carole A. Gnatuk, Extension Child Development Specialist, University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture

Physical Activity is Fun for the Whole Family

Many children, including toddlers, do not get enough exercise every day to keep their bodies healthy. The USDA recommends that children and adolescents get at least 60 minutes of physical activity nearly every day.

One great way to be sure your toddler is active is to build in time for physical activity for the whole family. Your child learns his attitudes about exercise from you. If you show him that it's fun to be active, he is more likely to try it.



Here are some tips to make activity a fun part of your whole family's life.

- Find places for active play. Yards, playgrounds, and parks provide plenty of room for your toddler to run. If you live in a cold climate, look for indoor recreation centers and playgrounds.
- Play with your child. Instead of standing by and watching while your child plays, join in by running or climbing with her.
- Schedule it in. You don't have to carve out one 60-minute block of activity time every day. Even short stretches of activity, such as a 10-minute game of tag, can help increase your family's fitness.
- Turn off the TV. Children who spend a lot of time watching television are less likely to be physically active. Choose at least one day a week as "turn off the TV day." Instead of watching TV that day, take a walk to the playground or roll a ball to each other.
- Try something new. Physical activity can get boring if you do the same old thing every day. Set up an obstacle course, and take turns climbing, crawling, and jumping. Take an afternoon hike or a weekend camping trip.

Play simple games, but don't worry about rules yet. Your child enjoys simple chasing games, and a game of tag can get his heart beating. Don't worry about teaching the rules of tag; just enjoy it.

References: These materials were adapted by authors from Extension Just in Time Parenting Newsletters in California, Delaware, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Tennessee, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, and Wisconsin.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christy Nuetzman".

Christy Nuetzman, Clinton County Extension Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences

This edition written by Teran Ransom, Hardin County Extension Agent for Family & Consumer Science
Newsletter produced by: Extension Family & Consumer Science Agents in District 5 in cooperation with the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service.

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February 2011



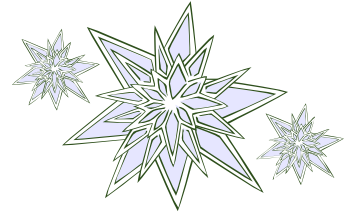
Loving Kids When They are Stuck Indoors

It's easy for kids to be bored if they're feverish, itchy or stuck in the house because of a sprain, break or recent surgery. To help you cope without resorting to electronics all day long, here are ideas from other parents that aren't too messy, especially for children who are in bed. These may be useful on "Snow Days" as well.

- **Sticker art.** Even toddlers can decorate the blank side of a cereal box or construction paper with the stickers saved from direct mail, unwanted address labels or the colored circle from office supplies stores. They can turn the stickers into people and objects (cars, bikes, plates, sun, flowers) with crayoned details.
- **Rebus letters.** Kids who write can use stickers of things to create rebus word puzzles to share with family members or mail to friends. (If your tweens think rebuses are corny, point out that they were a precursor to the development of the alphabet, used in Egypt as early as 3400 BC. Writing them became popular in the 1700s and continued into the 1800s. Some were done as codes and others as entertainment.)
- **Paper chains.** Kids can cut scrap paper and yesterday's newspaper into paper dolls, critters, trucks, trees, buildings, snowflakes and anything else both of you can think of. Use cookie cutters, stencils or the images in coloring books if you need patterns, and provide water color paints, crayons, markers or chalk for adding color.
- **Name rocks.** Rocks with at least one flat side can be scrubbed and then kids can use alphabet stamps to add a name or word. Really smooth rocks will work as paperweights and rougher ones can be used as garden art.
- **Water color with crayon resist.** Anything that kids outline with a crayon will "resist," or not be covered by, water color paint. Young children may find this magical; they can scribble with a white crayon on white paper and then brush on color to see what emerges.
- **Sponge Painting.**
- **Glow-in-the-Dark.** If you've picked up glow-in-the-dark paint at a hardware or craft store, a housebound older child can decorate paper, turn a fabric scrap into a night-time banner or even draw stars on the bedroom walls. Some brands was away with soap and water; if your child wants to paint rocks to outline a path in the yard, check package labels for information on permanence and clean-up.
- **Fill a small bucket with the odds and ends your patient can turn into treasures:** leftover puzzle pieces, game board markers, toilet paper and paper towel tubes, orphan socks, corks, film canisters and scraps of fabric, felt and yarn. Add markers, white glue, masking or duct tape and whatever other extras are appropriate for your child's skill level and work area and the amount of supervision you can provide. Some possible projects from Mary Ann Kohl's Art with Anything: 52 Weeks of Fun Using Everyday Stuff (Gryphon House, 2010):



- **Puzzle people.** As Kohl points out, many jigsaw pieces resemble people with heads and little around legs and arms. Kids can decorate the front or back with markers, tiny pompons, yarn or sequins.
- **Toy relief.** If your kids have seen textured flat sculptures in art displays or 3D maps, they've seen reliefs. Now, with tiny toys, pieces from playthings, games, holiday floral displays, old keys and buttons and all those other unused items from your junk drawer, kids can cover a square of wood or heavy cardboard. Use lots of white glue and make sure all the space is filled. After a day or so to dry, the relief can be painted with a single color to unify the pieces.



When kids of any age don't feel well enough to read, they may like music, podcasts of humor programs like NPR's "Car Talk" or audio books, many of which are now available as downloads from your library.

Another option which may require a long-term commitment is a critter. Or two or three. Birds, rodents, guinea pigs, kittens and a dog (especially if it's small enough to be on the bed) can also be comforting friends during a long illness. (If your household isn't ready for the permanent addition of a pet, perhaps a friend or neighbor has a kitten or dog that would like to visit for a few hours each day. Or ask your animal shelter about fostering critters.)

Middle and high school kids who are housebound can't do homework or Facebook all the time. If they feel well enough to be out of bed, here are projects to suggest:

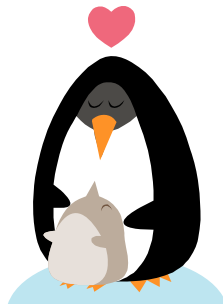
Pebble Potpourri can help dispel sickroom odors. All you need is a large handful of clean pebbles or beach glass and a few drops of a fragrant essential oil (rose, perhaps, or peppermint). Mix the two together and display them on a pretty dish in the middle of the room or near a radiator. (Essential oils are available in aromatherapy stores; remember that some are toxic.)

Piñatas. Plan ahead for a Valentine celebration! For an appropriate shape, kids can cut two cardboard frames in a heart shape and attach them with cardboard strips. The whole thing can be covered with paper mache using leftover tissue paper from the holidays or newsprint from your recycling bin. So that treats can be added when it's party time, make sure a hole is left at the top.

Model cars, boats and aircraft. Hobby shops have lots of kits, or someone can pick up balsa wood, wire and other components to use with the free plans available online.

Kentucky Saves Week February 20 - 27

Tip: Show kids how to keep their money safe. Show them how you save credit card charge receipts or record debit transactions and how these can be compared with your monthly statement, to ensure all charges are accurate and legitimate.



Source: Parenting Press, www.parentingpress.com/ezine.html

Sincerely,

Christy Nuetzman, Clinton County Extension Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences

Newsletter produced by: Extension Family & Consumer Sciences Agents in District 5 in cooperation with the University Of Kentucky College of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service. This month's edition was written by Becky Nash, Taylor County Extension Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences.

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March is National Nutrition Month!

During the month of March, we celebrate many things! Spring arrives and it is also National Nutrition Month. This is a great time to involve your children in outdoor play, introduce great eating habits and create family memories.

Make Meal Time Family Time

Family meals allow your preschooler to focus on the task of eating and give you a chance to model good behaviors.

It takes a little work to bring everyone together for meals. But it's worth it and the whole family eats better.

- Start eating meals together as a family when your kids are young. This way, it become a habit.
- Plan when you will eat together as a family. Write it on your calendar.
- You may not be able to eat together every day. Try to have family meals most days of the week.



Have your child help you get ready to eat. Depending on age, your child may be able to:

- * Help set the table
- * Put pet, toys, or book in another room
- * Turn off TV
- * Hand out napkins and silverware
- * Pick flowers for table
- * Clear the table
- * Wipe the table



Make family meals enjoyable

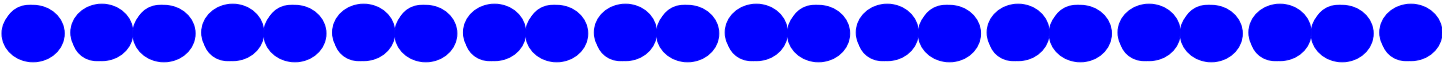
- Focus on the meal and each other. Turn off the television. Take phone calls later.
- Talk about fun and happy things. But, don't lecture or force your child to eat.
- Involve your child in conversation. Ask questions like:
 - * What made you feel happy today?
 - * What did you have to eat at lunch today?
 - * What's your favorite veggie? Why?
 - * Tell me one thing you learned today.
 - * What mad you laugh today?

Ideas for fast family meals

- Cook it fast on busy nights. Try stir-fried meat and vegetables, quick soups, sandwiches, or quesadillas.
- Do some tasks the day before. Wash and cut vegetables or make a fruit salad. Cook lean ground beef or turkey for burritos or chili. Store everything in the fridge until ready to use.
- Find quick and tasty recipes that don't cost a lot to make.

Source: USDA mypyramid.com
February 9, 2011





Why Is Physical Activity Important?

Being physically active helps your preschooler learn healthy habits.

Health benefits:

- Active preschoolers are less likely to be overweight. Learn how to tell if you child is growing appropriately.
- Some physical activities, such as running and jumping rope, help bone growth.
- Active children are less likely to develop type 2 diabetes.

Developmental benefits:

- Physical activity helps children develop motor skills and coordination. Some activities that help are:
 - * Walking, running, hopping
 - * Balancing, dancing, stopping
 - * Throwing, catching, kicking
- Physical activity helps children learn to feel good about themselves. For example, they feel proud after learning how to bounce a ball or ride a bike.
- Active preschoolers are more likely to be happy.
- Physical activity can also help in mental development. For example, pretending to be wild animals lets children use their imagination and be creative.



As preschoolers run, climb, dance or stretch they build endurance, strength and flexibility.

- Walking, running and similar activities help build endurance.
- Climbing and lifting help build strength.
- Playing on playground equipment and stretching help maintain flexibility. If they don't make use of their flexibility, it starts to decrease as they get older.



If you are concerned about your child's ability to move and play actively, talk with your child's doctor.

Source: USDA www. Mypyramid.gov, February 9, 2011

If you would like additional information on nutrition for your family or your child, contact your local Extension Office or visit www.mypyramid.gov which has lots of interactive activities related to nutrition for the total life span.

Sincerely,

Christy Nuetzman
Clinton County Extension Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences

Newsletter produced by: Extension Family & Consumer Sciences Agents in District 5 in cooperation with the University Of Kentucky College of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service. This edition produced by Jennifer Bridge, Meade County FCS Agent.

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Celebrating family traditions

Family traditions serve many important purposes. They help families develop their own sense of uniqueness, character, and belonging. They give families a sense of stability as they move through different stages of change and growth. They enable family members to return to some sense of normalcy after they encounter challenges or crises. By adapting meaningful traditions, families can provide structure and consistency into their lives as well as build many memories to look back on and share with future generations.



Here are some ideas of fun family traditions:

- Rotate who sets the table or blows out the dinner candles each week or month.
- Designate a certain night of the week as leftover night.
- On weekend mornings, eat a certain type of breakfast, for example strawberry waffles on Saturday or sausage and egg quiche on Sundays.
- Go on a specific 'family only' outing at a specific time of the year such as a family camping trip or a family brunch on an important anniversary such as Dad's birthday or the grandparent's anniversary.
- Celebrate a pet's birthday. Don't know your pet's birthday? Decide on a day and celebrate this special member of your family every year!
- Make family stationery, holiday cards, or newsletters. Allow each family member to make a design contribution.
- Visit an elderly relative after your worship services.
- Have a weekly family lunch or dinner gathering after worship services.
- Every holiday season, plan a family outreach project for other families with needs. Decide as a family if it will be the same activity or a different one each year.



Resource: Curran, D. (1988). Traits of a healthy family. Ninth Ed. Ballentine Books: New York.

Source: Judy van de Venne, Extension Specialist for Family and Consumer Sciences, University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture

Creating Healthier Easter Baskets

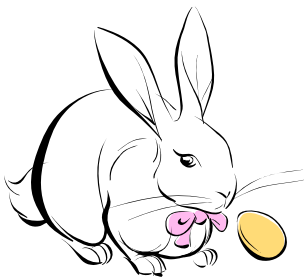
With Easter rapidly approaching, stocking kids' Easter baskets with healthy alternatives to chocolate and candy is a smart start to lead children down the path of healthier eating - by the time a child is six years old, chances are they've developed eating habits for life. While parents know it's important to provide nutritional treats for their children, they may not truly understand how to do so.



With Easter right around the corner, taking the time to learn how to pack a health-conscious Easter basket is a perfect way to kick start healthy eating habits.

Healthy, Sweet and Fun Easter Basket Ideas:

- **Bunny Cupcakes** - Bake or purchase whole grain carrot mini muffins - decorate with bunny cupcake toppers for extra fun.
- **Mix-It-Up** - Fill Easter eggs with sugar free gum, colorful Easter erasers, popcorn, stickers, Easter tattoos or trail mix with dried cranberries and golden raisins.
- **Too Cute** - Clementines will add a bold splash of spring color and are a sweet treat kids will love to eat. Mini red and green apples work well too.
- **Frozen Fun** - Freeze-dried fruit tastes just like candy - kids love bananas, mango and apples. Be sure they brush their teeth afterwards.
- **Egg Hunt** - Replace egg-shaped chocolate with egg-shaped chalk. Place the chalk eggs in colorful mesh netting and tie with ribbon. Have a bunny-drawing contest together for outdoor family fun.
- **Veg Out** - Now that spring is here, inspire kids to grow a vegetable and herb garden by packing a garden tote (in place of a basket) with a seed kit, mini pots and kid-size gardening gloves and spade.
- **Book-It** - Include Easter coloring books and crayons as well as educational books teaching kids eating healthy can be fun.



If you would like additional information for your family or your child, contact your local University of KY Cooperative Extension Office at 387-5404.

Sincerely,

Christy Nuetzman

Clinton County Extension Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences

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FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

May 2011



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Clinton County Extension Office, 2601 North Hwy 127, Albany, KY 42602

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Get Active



Physical activity is an essential component of a healthy lifestyle. In combination with healthy eating, it can help prevent a range of chronic diseases, including heart disease, cancer, and stroke, which are the three leading causes of death. Physical activity helps control weight, builds lean muscle, reduces fat, promotes strong bone, muscle and joint development, and decreases the risk of obesity. Children need 60 minutes of play with moderate to vigorous activity every day to grow up to a healthy weight. If this sounds like a lot, consider that eight to 18 year old adolescents spend an average of 7.5 hours a day using entertainment media including TV, computers, video games, cell phones and movies in a typical day, and only one-third of high school students get the recommended levels of physical activity. To increase physical activity, today's children need safe routes to walk and bike ride to school, parks, playgrounds and community centers where they can play after school, and activities like sports, dance or fitness programs that are exciting and challenging enough to keep them engaged.

Let's Move! aims to increase opportunities for kids to be physically active, both in and out of school and to create new opportunities for families to move together. For more information, visit the Let's Move! website at letsmove.gov.

Cooking with Kids: Butterfly Bite

- 3 stalks celery
- 12 large twist pretzels
- 6 tablespoons creamy peanut butter
- 3 tablespoons raisins

1. Wash hands and cooking area. 2. Clean celery with vegetable brush under cool running water. 3. Cut celery in half crosswise. 4. Fill center of each celery stick with one tablespoon of peanut butter. This is the body of the butterfly. 5. Add two pretzels to form the butterfly's wings. 6. Use extra pretzel pieces for antenna and raisins for decoration.



Yield: 6 servings

Nutrition facts per serving: 130 calories; 8 g fat; 1.5 g saturated fat; 0 g trans fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 190 mg sodium; 13 g total carbohydrate; 2 g dietary fiber; 5 g sugar; 5 g protein.

Source: *USDA Recipe Finder*



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Shaping Children's Behavior

The first rule of shaping behavior is to establish a trusting relationship with your child. Remember that you teach by your example as much as with words. Here are a few suggestions:

- Try to understand and relate to your child in a kind, respectful manner.
- Be patient. It takes time for children to change their behavior.
- Try to see your child's point of view. She may have good reasons for her actions that she does not have words to tell you.
- Praise your child when he does something well or makes positive efforts.
- Encourage positive behavior whenever possible.
- Behave in a warm and self-controlled manner, even when your child misbehaves.
- Set firm, consistent limits that are reasonable for your child's level of development. Setting limits is a way of showing your love, even if your child protests.

When children misbehave on purpose, natural or logical consequences teach better behavior without physical punishment. Natural consequences help children learn from the natural order of events. For example, Sara's dad told her to bring her new doll inside for the night. Instead, Sara left her new doll in the tree house overnight. The next morning she found that rain had left the doll soggy and mildewed. After many tears and attempts to wash the doll, Sara realized that it would never be the same. The weather was the natural consequence. Sara did not need a lecture or punishment. She learned respect for the natural order. She will likely think before she acts next time to prevent negative consequences.



Logical consequences, in contrast, do not naturally occur but rather are intentionally planned by adults. Logical consequences need to be related, respectful, and reasonable. For example, the natural consequence of running into the street, being hit by a car, is obviously unacceptable. Not allowing the child to play outside for a period of time after disobeying the rule of staying away from the street offers a more logical consequence.

Both natural and logical consequences can teach children to be responsible for their actions, recognize both parents' and children's rights, make wise decisions, and learn from mistakes. Additionally, they can help to develop mutual respect between parents and children and allow children to feel encouraged and develop positive self-esteem. Keep these things in mind the next time you handle misbehavior, and you will be able to effectively teach right from wrong.



References:

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- Pepper, F., and Roberson, M. (1982). Consequences: An alternative to punishment. *Individual Psychology: Journal of Adlerian Theory, Research & Practice* [serial online]. December 1982;38(4):387-397. Available from: PsycINFO, Ipswich, MA. Accessed March 5, 2010.

Source: Carole A. Gnatuk, Extension Child Development Specialist and Lauren Michalak, Graduate Assistant, University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture

Sincerely,

Christy Nuetzman

Clinton County Extension Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences

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