



PARENT SENSE BY VICKI CURRAN, EDS, LPC, NCC

Summer fun has begun

We made it! School is winding down and free time is on the horizon. But free time doesn't have to mean "down time." Here are some fun summer ideas to keep kids active and engaged:

- Sure we live at the beach, but when you can't make it there, why not bring the water to you? If you don't have a pool, how about making your own slip and slide? All you need is a sprinkler, a tarp and some environmentally friendly dish detergent. Spread out the tarp and off they go! Use goggles to protect eyes from soapy water.

- If you're really adventurous, build your own "kid wash." With some PVC piping and some creativity, kids can cool off with friends. For more information, go to <https://www.sixsistersstuff.com/pvc-pipe-sprinkler-kid-wash-tutorial/>.

- Play "dart sponges." Use some sidewalk chalk to draw a bullseye and target on your driveway or other paved area. Then put sponges into a bucket of water to soak and have the kids take turns to see who can hit the bullseye.

- How about cooling off without getting wet by making homemade ice cream? Follow the directions in this link: <https://www.icanteachmychild.com/ice-cream-in-a-bag/> or let kids "have a ball" making it with this: <https://www.amazon.com/Ya-y-labs-SoftShell-Ice-Cream-Ball/dp/B01ANG0808>.

- Too much fun in the sun? Ease sunburn pain with aloe vera ice cubes. Grab a bottle of natural aloe vera and a clean ice cube tray. Try to avoid aloe with added lotions or gels and other ingredients because these may interfere with the freezing process. Pour a good amount of aloe into each section of an ice cube tray and toss it in the freezer. Make sure to mark the trays "Don't eat!" so nobody thinks it's a frozen summer treat!

- Cooling off inside can be fun, especially if kids are recovering from a sunburn. Just construct a two-second tent. All you need is a sheet, some duct tape and a square fan. For directions see: <https://teachingmama.org/diy-air-fort/>

- For some night time fun, go glow-in-the-dark bowling. With six glow sticks, six empty water bottles, a ball heavy enough to knock over the refilled bottles and paper and pencil to keep score, you're all set. For more information go to: <http://www.mykidsadventures.com/how-to-create-glow-in-the-dark-bowling-in-your-home/>

- Another evening activity is to have a family hot dog roast. Get some "smorstix" from the supermarket and spear a hot dog. Roast them over your grill or fire pit.

- Play Frisbee Tic-Tac-Toe. All you need is tape, a blanket and a few Frisbees. Use the tape to create a grid on the blanket. Frisbees become the x's and o's. Kids can strategize as well as work on their hand-eye coordination.

- Construct an obstacle course. Kids can have a blast running through hula hoops, crawling under pool noodles and sliding to the finish line when you turn your backyard into a crazy and colorful obstacle course. Go to <https://www.youtube.com/w>

<atch?v=j66l8q4Z5Ts> and discover all the fun you can create with just a few Summer items.

- Throw a clothesline art show. If your children like to draw or paint, spend a day being creative and then display their work on a clothesline. Make invitations for friends and neighbors.

Kids can even stretch their entrepreneur skills by having a lemonade stand or bake sale to sell as refreshments!

Teach them how to manage the money they make by having them decorate "give" "save" and "spend" jars. Teach them money smarts by divvying up the money they earn for buying things, donating and saving up.

Making summer memories makes the most of every moment that we have with our kids. Not only is it fun, but we also get to show our kids how not to depend on technology for entertainment.

Go have some fun!

For more information or a list of local licensed professionals, contact Coastal Community Counseling Resources at 732-612-3148.