

THERAPLAY



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Family Summer Activities for Fun and Exercise

Summer is here and school is out! Kids are excited, but many parents wonder how to fill all those hours. Though it's tempting to stay inside where it's cool and watch TV or play video games, summer is a great time to get outside and show children fun ways to stay active and fit. Here are a few ways to get the whole family moving during the summer:

- Take walks – Start out slow and keep it enjoyable. Be sure to have good quality sneakers on all walkers.

- Play ball games – Use different sized balls, vary the catching styles, and play a variety of games like basketball, bouncing and throwing games.

- Wash the car as a family – Everybody can wear bathing suits, and let the kids use the hose – they'll have a blast getting their parents wet!

- Play on the playground – Go first thing in the morning or later in the evening when it's cooler. The kids will be more likely to run around for longer.

- Have fun in the pool – Don't just sunbathe. Encourage kids to play games in the water, like Sharks

and Minnows or Marco Polo. Taking swimming lessons is also a great activity. Not only are they important for safety, but children learn different strokes, diving tips, and other skills.

- Set up obstacle courses in the yard – Use patio or lawn furniture, play equipment and plants to create a course for the whole family.

- Plan a Family Fun day – Include sports, hose and sprinkler games, sidewalk chalk, water balloons, crafts and contests. Invite neighbors and friends for added fun.

- Go to a local nature park – Check out wildlife while having a scavenger hunt. Look for different trees, birds, animals and bugs.

- Make a treasure hunt in the backyard – Create clues and hide them all over the yard. The final clue can lead everyone to popsicles, toys, or lunch!

- Plant a garden – Make sure to use seeds that can be planted during the summer. Let the kids do the planting and caring for the garden, and watch your seeds grow.

- Set up a lemonade stand – This is a great activity for kids after be-

ing active all day. Kids can quench their thirst while making a little bit of money for their next fun activity!

Families should also get to know what is available in their community. Many libraries, townships and cities have tons of free activities planned for the summer. You can combine sedentary activities, like a movie in the park, with something physical, like biking to get there.

These are just a few ideas on how to get your family up and moving during the summer. Remember to stay safe, use sunscreen, be active, keep cool, hydrate and most importantly, have fun!

Children that do not engage in physical activity on a daily basis often have weight and health issues. The sooner you can instill a love of activity in your child, the better. If you are concerned about your child's lack of energy or interest in physical activities talk to your pediatrician or contact Theraplay, Inc. Theraplay has offices in West Chester, Quakertown, Newtown, Limerick, Landenberg, Horsham and Broomall. For more information visit theraplayinc.com.