



THE FAMILY TREE

Summer Fun Tips

Summer can be an active time for children, but it can also create a lot of down time. Keep your children active, happy and busy during the summer months with the following tips for both sunny and rainy days.

On Rainy Days:

- o Write and perform a play together.
- o Create a "serial story." One person tells the first part of the story, and then someone else picks it up, and then another person, until everyone has a turn (if the last person isn't ready to end the story, it can keep going).
- o Start a found-object percussion marching band, using spoons and pots, jars of dry beans, pencils and cans, or whatever other unbreakable objects happen to be lying around.
- o Get everyone to act as if they were playing a character in a book--make it more interesting by using characters from different books in the same scene.

When the Weather's Nice

- o Family bike ride with fantasy play.
- o Hike or nature walk.
- o Evolution games: find things in order going up the food chain from plankton to plants to small mammals to predators.
- o Bird-watching, animal spotting, and the like (bring binoculars--and don't forget smaller animals like salamanders, or lizards in the southwest, and chipmunks anywhere).
- o Go swimming.
- o Go berry picking.
- o Gardening (both my kids each have a small garden plot).
- o Explore a cave together (give a safety lesson first).
- o Visit an educational nature center, butterfly conservatory, unique zoo exhibit, etc.

Be sure that your kids have a safe and happy summer! Don't let them turn into summer couch potatoes or say "I have nothing to do." Have them come up with their own ideas for adventure and fun – it's easier than you think!