

'Family Activity Jar' for Kids



Create a “Family Activity Jar.” Work with your children to come up with a list of things they like to do. Write each item down on a slip of paper and put all of the papers in the jar. The next time your child says they are bored, tell them to choose a slip from the “Activity Jar” and let them work on whatever idea they picked. You can decorate the jar as a group as one of the activities. Here are some ideas to get you started.

Grow a Container Garden

It's easy to grow a container garden. Even if you live in an apartment, there is room on a windowsill for a small potted plant or herb. The easiest and most rewarding plants for a patio or indoor garden are culinary herbs or leafy salads: great for cooking and garnishing! For good success from seed, try parsley, chives, rosemary and arugula.

Do ‘mindful movement’ videos

Apps like *GoNoodle* are full of mindful videos that are designed to release pent up energy in kids while helping them learn at the same time. Your kids will probably be familiar with *GoNoodle* from school and it's easy for parents to create a family account ahead of time so that your children can use them whenever they need to dance their boredom blues away.

Play hide-and-seek

And oldie, but a goodie. This works for families with siblings and can be done in or outdoors. If they are playing this outside, set parameters for how far your kids can go to find their hiding spots.

Have a dance party

Create a playlist with your kids ahead of time and then put it on when they choose this option. By the time they're done dancing and singing along to their favorite songs, they'll be too tired to be bored.

Make a fort

Kids love making forts and this is a great idea for those winter days when you're all stuck inside. Let them use pillows, blankets and anything else that is hanging around to create their own private fort. Bringing in a flashlight and some books will keep them busy for quite a while.

Make an obstacle course

If you have a toddler or preschooler, they will need your help for this, but elementary-aged kids can handle making an obstacle course on their own. Older kids will feel accomplished creating it themselves and will be excited to show you what they've done.

Clean and re-organize their room

Depending on your kid's taste, you may hear some groans if they pick this one. If they seem less than excited to tackle it, offer up cleaning the kitchen as an alternative. Odds are they'll make a beeline for their bedroom and end the day with a clean room that they feel good about.

Do a yoga or fitness class

There are tons of yoga and fitness classes on YouTube that are geared toward kids of all ages. Make a playlist ahead of time so that it's ready to go when they choose this option. Take a look at *Cosmic Kids* and *Kidz Bop* for child-friendly video options.

Go on a Lego hunt

You'll need four pieces of paper and an assortment of Lego blocks that match in color for this activity. Start by laying out the four pieces of paper and hiding the Lego blocks somewhere in your home or have older siblings hide them. Your kids must then go find the Lego pieces and place them on the matching colored paper until all of the pieces have been found.

Play Heads, Bodies, Tails

Sometimes called “The Exquisite Corpse” this old-fashioned parlor game requires two or more people, a piece of paper and at least one pencil. In Heads, Bodies and Tails the first player draws a hat (and maybe the sky?), and then folds the paper over to reveal only the brim. The next player, without looking at the first picture, draws a head, leaving only the neck. Player 3 (or the first player again) draws the body, leaving the waist. The next person draws the legs, and then finally someone draws the shoes. There are many variations on this game. All are creative and hilarious.

