

A Benefit For You

BEST CARE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

EAP Notes

Families that Play Together, Stay Together



It's a fact: Children are much less likely to have mental health and substance use problems when they have positive activities to do and when caring adults are involved in their lives. Sure you spend a lot of time with your kids taking them to practice and running errands, however driving from place to place in the mini-van doesn't count. Carve out real time and schedule family only activities on your calendar. The rewards are worth far more than the time and effort involved in the activity planning.

Consider the following inexpensive, indoor activities for the winter months.

- ☺ **Literally Family Movie Night.** Does it seem like the camcorder is always rolling, but how often do you watch what you film? Break out the family films and watch those forgotten dance recitals and soccer games. Or even better, watch mom and dad's wedding video and laugh at the fashion and hairstyles. Maybe even give an award for the best performance.
- ☺ **Think Summer.** When the winter wind is blowing, stay warm by dreaming of your family summer vacation. As a family, begin making vacation plans by reading about different locations and attractions, looking at maps or figuring distances. Not only can a vacation generate a lot of conversation it can be educational as well.
- ☺ **Mix it up.** Everyone can take part in making family friendly meals. Little ones can put cupcake liners into pans and chocolate chips in the batter. Older kids can learn to measure and read recipes. As always knives, stoves and electric appliances should only be used under parental supervision.
- ☺ **Read between the Lines.** Family story time can be a great way to share the classics or make up tales of your own. Encourage your kids to act out parts in the story or read in *character* voices. Your local library can offer advice on what stories work best with each age group.
- ☺ **Roll the Dice.** Family game night is often a favorite no matter what the weather. Playing board games or card games together teaches children about competition, how to win graciously, and how to lose without being a sore loser.
- ☺ **Volunteer as a Family.** What better way to build your family unit than helping others in need? Consider your children's interests when volunteering. If they enjoy pets, volunteer at your local animal shelter. Or choose a different charity each month.

Source: National Wellness Institute,
www.homemadesimple.com

There is nothing more important than the strength of your family bond. Best Care EAP can help if you feel that you're losing touch. Please call (402) 354-8000 or 800-666-8606.

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