

Extension

November 2015 Newsletter

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Playful Ways for Cooler Days

Tracy Trumper, Family and Consumer Extension Agent, Phillips County

Relief from the heat is often welcome with the falling leaves and changing colors of fall. With the change of seasons comes change in our active lives. Kids were once playing in the outdoor pool, participating in organized sports like baseball, softball, and soccer, and going for bike rides down to the park during the warmer months. What to do when it starts to get cold outside to keep young hearts healthy, young bones and muscles strong, and young bodies energized? NO couch potatoes allowed! There are many activities that kids can do to help keep them fit while having fun during the fall and winter months.

First of all, just because the temperature drops does not mean that outside activities have to cease. Just remember to wear warm layers of clothing, drink water with increasing activity and wear sunscreen. Here are some outdoor activities to enjoy in the fall that is fun for all ages:

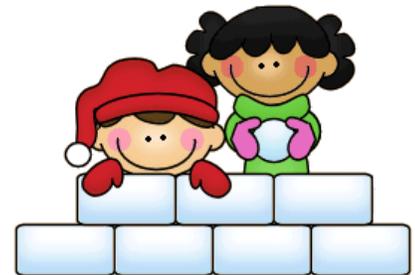
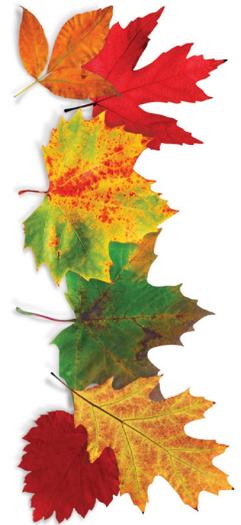
- Enjoy the beautiful foliage on a walk or hike
- Rake leaves and play in the piles
- Visit a pumpkin patch to select the perfect pumpkins
- Visit a corn maze
- Try a holiday race like a "Turkey Trot" 5k walk or run

When the snow starts to fall try these fun activities:

- Snowshoeing around your yard or out on a golf course
- Ice skating at an indoor or outdoor rink
- Sledding on your favorite hill
- Build a snowman or snow fort
- Go cross country skiing
- Have a snowball fight and make snow angels
- Help your neighbors by shoveling their snow

There are always cold, wet, snowy days that require everyone to be inside for the day. Again, parents can encourage kids to be active while inside the home. The following are a few ideas to help keep kids moving while using their imaginations and their brains.

- Turn up the music and dance
- Play board games or card games for a while and then switch to a more active game
- Let friends come over to build forts with blankets and the furniture.
- Jump rope
- See who can balance on one foot the longest
- Hula hoop



In addition, if there is an internet connection in the home, go to www.youtube.com and search “Zumba Kids.” There are a number of video dances that kids can do with fun music, interesting background and dance leaders, who are kids. The site is done by FamilyFriendlyGaming, so the dances and music are age appropriate. The site looks very much like what kids would see if they were playing on an Xbox. So, a couple of kids can watch and perform the dances from the computer screen. For more ideas about fitness activity, nutrition and recipes visit: <http://www.liveeatplay.colostate.edu>

Let's Talk:

Children like to be active and move, but might need a little motivation and fun ideas to keep the body in motion on a cold wintery day. Try setting a kitchen timer so that everyone gets up from the TV, book reading, computer or other sedentary activity every 30- 40 minutes to do something active for 10- 20 minutes. Be a good role model and get moving with the kids.

Recipe for Health: Homemade Applesauce

It's yummy either hot or cold!

Makes: 4 cups

Ingredients:

3 pounds (about 12) cooking apples, peeled,
Cored & sliced
1/2 to 3/4 cup sugar
1/2 cup water
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon



Directions:

1. In a large microwave-safe bowl, combine all ingredients, stirring well.
2. Cover bowl with wax paper, microwave 9 minutes, then stir.
3. Cover and continue microwaving 5 to 8 minutes or until apples are soft.
4. Mash apples and serve warm or cold.

Helpful Hints: Apples are available year around, but the best buys are September to February. Delicious, Gala and McIntosh are great for eating alone or in salads. Tart apples, such as Granny Smith and Jonathan, make the best pies and applesauce. Adapted from Kids a Cooking, Kansa State University