



# Summer Guide

Ending Violence and its Effects in Rural Schools (EVERS)

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## **Welcome to Summer 2020**

Let's face it... the summer of 2020 is different than any in recent history.

But you can help make it the best summer yet! Inside are a few ideas for some really awesome, child-approved summer fun.

Let the kids have input when planning your summer. Have ideas in place to help stoke your kids' imaginations, but be sure to save room for their ideas as well. Throughout the summer you can feed your child's brain but, more importantly, have fun together!

You have all been through a lot this year, and all too soon it will be back-to-school time. So enjoy the now!





# Keep (or Establish) Summer Routines

Children need adequate sleep year-round for their development. Have set wake-up and bed times. All children benefit from clear expectations and some structure, even during the summer months.

- Poor summer habits such as skipping breakfast or excessive snacking will come back to haunt your kids next school year.
- Maintain regular meals.
- Establish daily routines, such as family game time after chores or morning walks for the dog.
- But don't over-schedule. Children need downtime to explore, create, and relax.

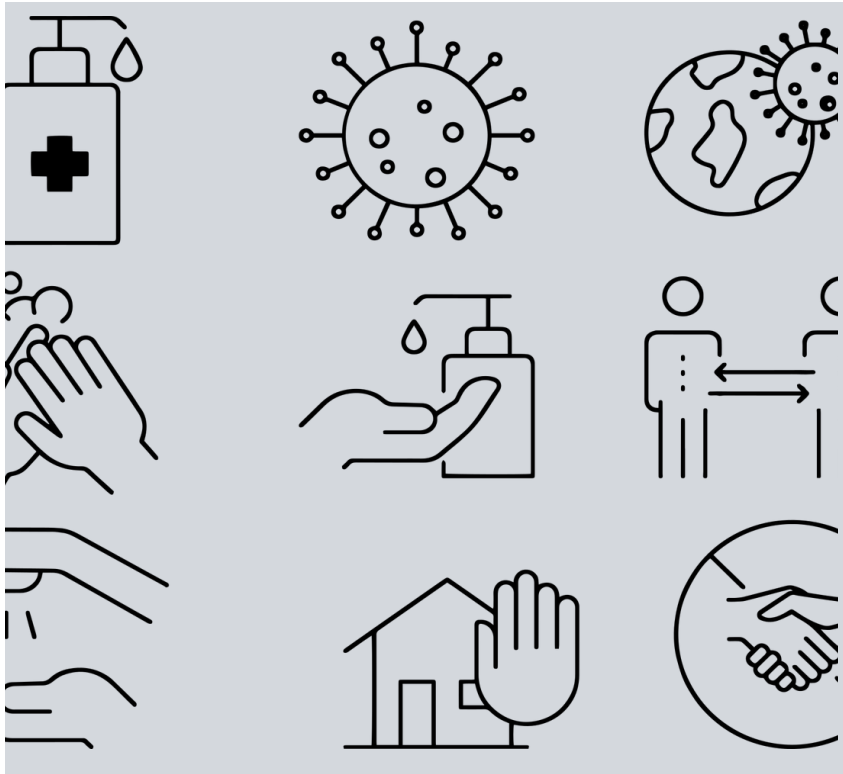
## Make a Family Wish Jar

A UK mom's take on a "bucket list" has inspired thousands of families to foster a sense of hope and optimism in this difficult time. During their lockdown in Leeds, England, the Eborall family decided to turn a negative situation into something positive.

Every time their family of four wished they could do something they loved to do, such as go somewhere, visit a place (old or new), treat themselves, see someone they loved, invite people to visit or anything else imaginable, they decided to write it down on a note and put it in a Wish Jar. When their lockdown ended, the notes became their wish list and they decided to work their way through the jar. As they looked at their note, they laughed and began the journey of planning to fulfill each wish as their community opened up again.

They enjoyed watching the jar fill up with magical things to look forward to, and found they were more grateful than ever for the little and lovely things in their lives. As they took notes out of the jar, they realized that it was a wonderful reminder of all the things that they sometimes took for granted, but also a reminder of how very much they mean to us. They are fully committed to doing every activity that is noted in the jar, and keeping the Wish Jar handy for future times when a "wish" pops up!





# Create a COVID Time Capsule

Years from now, you and your children will look back and remember 2020 as the year you all finished the school year at home and spent a lot of time together. Download the file here ([https://fun4tallykids.com/index.php?option=com\\_mtree&task=att\\_download&link\\_id=7865&cf\\_id=24](https://fun4tallykids.com/index.php?option=com_mtree&task=att_download&link_id=7865&cf_id=24)) and fill the pages with photos from this time, news clippings, artwork and your special memories. OR, call a family meeting to create your own COVID-19 Time Capsule. Be creative!

## Go on a Bear Hunt!

Playdates might be limited or on hold, but seeking out some stuffed animals is the new bearable activity in communities across the country! Bears are cropping up everywhere and they're fair game for bored kids and frazzled families.

Stuffed animals are appearing in windows around the world in global "Teddy Bear Hunts" for children. Not only are they delighting children and parents alike, they are uniting neighborhoods and giving children an exciting, social-distancing-safe scavenger hunt activity.

The hunts are inspired by Michael Rosen's 1989 children's book *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, which opens with the lines, "We're going on a bear hunt / We're going to catch a big one / What a beautiful day! / We're not scared."

Thanks to community involvement and support, in northeast Iowa, a group of "hunters" spotted more



than 250 bears in neighborhood windows. In Monmouth, Maine, a resident reported that she took her kids on a hunt to forget about COVID-19 for a while. "For about an hour we didn't think about anything else that was happening in the world," she said. "It was just about the bears. The kids sat in the back seat. My daughter kept a tally. We kept looking, and it was only that. I had completely forgotten what was going on until we pulled back into the yard."

So next time you're looking for a fun idea for kids, organize a bear hunt (or perhaps hearts/rainbows that thank healthcare workers). EVERYONE will benefit!

# Don't Forget to Use Outdoor Spaces



Various research studies are confirming that community parks and recreation, green space, and time outdoors is critical for creating healthy, active children and families, as well as sustainable communities. You can experience the benefits by connecting with the outdoors any time of the year, but especially during the summer when kids have more time and family schedules may be a little more relaxed.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we realize many of your celebrations will be virtual or tailored to maintain physical distancing. Be sure to be mindful of physical distancing guidelines and guidance from your state and local government and public health officials while you are out and about.

## Simple play activities to involve the whole family!

- Family bike rides
- Hikes on trails that are open
- Sidewalk chalk art
- Outdoor morning yoga
- Fishing
- Building a backyard obstacle course
- Playing in the sprinkler
- Planting a garden
- Flying a kite!

## Health and Wellness Benefits of Spending Time Outdoors:

According to recent polls, 83 percent of U.S. adults agree that being outside and visiting local parks, trails, and open spaces is essential for their mental and physical well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Nearly three in five adults say that access to outdoor, park, and recreation amenities are essential to their mental and physical health.
- The out-of-doors provides a connection to nature, which studies demonstrate relieves stress, tightens interpersonal relationships, and improves mental health.
- On average, children who live in “green” environments weigh less than children who live in less green areas.

# Go Low Tech Outside

- Set up a build-your-own-hotdog bar! Hot off the grill, what can be better?
- Have a watermelon seed spitting contest
- Run through a sprinkler
- Nap in a hammock
- Create your own games (really think retro here...)
  - Ring Toss
  - Horseshoes/Cornhole
  - Bean Bag Toss using a ladder to create different levels of challenges
  - Water balloon fights
  - (Potato) Sack Races - everyone can play... create teams
  - Egg and Spoon Relay Races
- Stargaze - download star maps and watch for special star events in July / August
- Show your own outdoor movie
- Play Flashlight Tag
  - Arm any group of kids with flashlights, and you don't even have to suggest a game. Swap the classic game of touch tag with flashlights for a fun evening activity. Or update a flashlight tag with colored bulbs or a piece of colored cellophane wrapped around the light and secured with a rubber band—it's like a low-cost laser tag.
- Catch fireflies
- Camp out in the backyard
- Campfires / s'mores (every kid is an expert marshmallow roaster!)
- Sing alongs (pick up that old guitar again)
- Become expert storytellers
  - Personalize your stories by starting a story and having everyone add a line or two. The twists and turns of your family story may become hilarious!





# Check Out Free Printables

Get instant access to a wide variety of free educational resources for teachers, homeschool families, and parents.

Ready to print, these free materials make it easy for you to download and use immediately! Choose from reading, language arts, math, social studies, science, and more.

<https://www.carsondellosa.com/free-resources/free-printables/>

## Hats On/Hats Off!

Take inspiration from the Mad Hatter for this game of make-believe. Gather a variety of old hats, new hats, baseball caps, fishing hats, straw hats, cowboy hats, occupational hats (either plastic or real), including firefighter helmets, police officer caps, etc. Feel free to include plastic versions of tiaras, crowns, and any other fun hats that can be found at party supply or thrift stores. Let each child pick a different type of hat. Tell the kids to pretend to be a baseball player if they have the baseball cap, a princess if they have the tiara, and so on. Then let the kids make up a story and act it out. Yell "Switch!" in the middle of their story; everyone trades hats and acts out their new characters.



*Birthdays come just once year, but un-birthdays can be celebrated any day in the topsy-turvy time of summer. Make (and be sure to decorate) cupcakes and sing at the top of their loudest outdoor voices - "Happy Un-Birthday to You!"*

*Create a Topsy-Turvy Silly Day - with breakfast foods served at dinner time and dinner foods served for breakfast. Yummy fun!*



# Create a Camp

What was the best part of camping when you were a kid? Freedom to be yourself and make (some) of your own decisions? Friendships? While we can't independently create the spontaneity of in-person camp experiences, we can learn and have fun together. Here are a few ideas to create a variety of camp-type days. You can schedule different camps on individual days or string together days or weeks of activities at a time.

This summer, one great option is the National Children's Museum's Daily STEAMwork videos. Everyday since March 17, the museum has created videos to inspire kids in science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM). There are now more than 60 videos on the museum website with a list of materials needed for each. Check it out:

<https://nationalchildrensmuseum.org/steamwork/>

**national  
children's  
museum**

NOTE: The museum is also offering daily virtual programs everyday at 1:30 pm CST on the National Children's Museum Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/NationalChildrensMuseum>):

Sunday: sensory play

Monday: climate action challenge

Tuesday: science exploration

Wednesday: storytime

Thursday: design + build

Friday: nature spotlight

Saturday: community connection



# Rainy Day? No Problem!



- Splash in rain puddles / play in the mud
- Look for a rainbow!
- Paper Toss Game:
  - Save yourself the risk of playing catch indoors with a ball by using paper instead. Set up a basketball-style game with a tall basket (laundry baskets work well for young kids) and give each child a set of crumpled up paper "balls." See how many baskets they can make in five minutes.
- Try your hand at face painting (regular water color paint works great).
- Make some DIY slime or mud pies:
  - There are all kinds of recipes to be found; simply go online and look up "slime recipes." Most call for just a few household ingredients.

## Still raining? Time for an indoor scavenger hunt!

Visit  
<https://www.mykidstime.com/things-to-do/indoor-scavenger-hunt-list/>  
for lots of free ideas.



### Free Printable Indoor Scavenger Hunt





# Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body...keep it active !



## Visit Your Community Library

- Get your library card and one for your child if you don't already have one.
- Check out your local library's summer programs.

## Create Reading Journals

Encourage children to create a reading journal where they can compile lists of their favorite books or authors, books that they want to read, or write down anything that inspires them. They may even want to try writing their own story in their journal.

## Book Clubs

- Encourage reading and expose your whole family to new adventures, knowledge, and fun.
- Reading and sharing stories promotes literacy and an overall love of books; it also builds strong relationships. When you plan and expand book club activities, you can encourage your kids and their friends to associate reading with fun, especially when club meetings become parties complete with treats and activities related to the books you and your kids are reading. Clubs can be in person, long-distance, virtual, or over the phone.
- Meet outdoors for a nature-focused story or have everyone dress like a character in the book you're discussing. Offer snacks or make crafts that tie to book themes or encourage discussion about books in general. For example, make a plate of "conversation cookies." With frosting, write words on the cookies such as "best part," "humor," or "surprise." The child who picks that cookie can talk about the plot twist of the story, or tell what s/he thought was the funniest or best part of the book. For older kids, words such as "plot" or "theme" can encourage more age-appropriate discussions.



# Summer Snacktime



Summer snacks are fun! They can represent colors, activities, and even seasons.

- Visit an outdoor summer market
- Make your own ice cream
- Eat popsicles and ice cream cones outside
- Make your own homemade lemonade and set up a neighborhood lemonade stand to share
- Find colorful, child-friendly snacks to make:
  - Rainbow veggie kabobs on a stick - stack by colors
  - Arrange a rainbow of fruit by color on a plate
  - Rainbow parfaits with yogurt and fruit
  - No-bake fruit pizza



Try this:

## *Ants on a Log*

- spread nut butter on celery and dot with raisins

## *Ladybug*

- spread half an apple with nut butter and use a toothpick to attach a grape for the head



*The goal of the EVERS project is to help train and equip school staff to recognize and offer quality resources and referrals to address the fallout from any form of violence that may be affecting their students. EVERS works toward this goal by providing quality training, effective resources, and deliberate collaboration with important community partners. The long-term impact of EVERS is even greater: it will ensure improved opportunities for students and families alike to build life-long strengths-based skills and resiliency to reduce the impact of trauma, break the cycle of violence, and prepare students for life-long, violent-free academic and workforce success.*

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